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Life in Scotland a Hundred Years Ago

Life in Scotland
A Hundred Years Ago

AS REFLECTED IN THE

Old Statistical Account of Scotland
1791-1799

By

JAMES MURRAY, M.A.
AUTHOR OF "KILMACOLM: A PARISH HISTORY"

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INTRODUCTORY.

In the year 1790 Sir John Sinclair, Bart., conceived the idea of obtaining from the minister of every parish in Scotland a statistical account of his own parish. It was an undertaking whose difficulty and magnitude it were not easy to overestimate. The work he contemplated was to be the result of contributions from more than nine hundred individuals. With marvellous tact and infinite patience he persevered in his aim, determined at least to deserve success. "At last," we quote his own words, "on the first day of January, 1798, or seven years, seven months, and seven days from the commencement of the attempt, an account of every parish in Scotland was either given in, or might be relied on in the space of a few days." The first volume was published in 1791 ; the twenty-first and concluding volume in 1799. These twenty-one large volumes contain a vast amount of information about every district in Scotland almost exactly a hundred years ago. The information is of the most miscellaneous character. Although a schedule of inquiries was

issued to each contributor, a free hand was given to every minister to note everything he considered of interest regarding his own particular parish. The chief statistical queries were replied to in almost every instance; but, in addition, each account, in what it describes, and often also in what it omits, bears the stamp of the idiosyncracies of its author. Unconsciously he reflects his own bent of mind, his tastes and prejudices, his social and political views. But no one can examine these volumes without feeling that they testify to a high average of intellectual ability, sound sense, and moral character among the clergy of the Church of Scotland of the period. One is struck by the thorough knowledge displayed of everything connected with the parish, the careful accuracy with which facts are stated, the genuine sympathy felt, especially with the poorer classes, and the fairness and impartiality with which judgments are formed and expressed. No one can doubt that these contemporary records by fairly intelligent and entirely honest observers afford the most reliable material, so far as it goes, for a true picture of Scotland at the time with which it deals. I believe that no satisfactory attempt has yet been made to marshal into line the vast multitude of facts here collected; and it is a task

towards which, however important, I have little inclination. So far as I am concerned I leave the crop still in the fields, and am content in this volume simply to glean among the sheaves, and pick up any unconsidered trifles lying about that take my fancy. I have sought to gather together the curiosities rather than the solid information of the Statistical Accounts, the *obiter dicta* of the writers rather than their serious matter.

In following out my plan I have observed the following rules :—1st, To confine myself exclusively to the Statistical Account. It would have been easy to supplement from other sources—in some cases it was hard to refrain from supplementing—the information given regarding, for example, marriage and burial customs. But no statement has been admitted for which a reference can not be given to the Statistical Account. 2nd, To present a full conspectus of the information contained in the Statistical Account on the subjects dealt with ; and 3rd, For the most part to quote the authors' own words in preference to summarizing their statements. This has necessarily entailed a certain amount of repetition ; but only thus could the exact testimony of these volumes be set forth. All who value accuracy of detail will prefer to listen to a number of witnesses

telling the same story, each from his own standpoint, than to be presented with a summary of their evidence.

In arranging the materials I am sorry that I have not been able entirely to avoid cross divisions, or to make the chapter headings fully descriptive of their contents. I have tried to meet this objection by prefixing to each chapter a summary of contents, and by providing a tolerably full index. The book has few pretensions, but I hope it may not only afford some entertainment to the general reader, but also be of some use to the student of history.

J. M.

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AGRICULTURAL.

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4. Miscellaneous—gool courts—extermination of foxes—no rats in Rosneath—why bells are cultivated—Dr. Johnson found at fault.

For centuries agriculture had made but little progress in Scotland. The farmers tilled the soil after the same methods as their fathers had

followed, and employed the same cumbrous and old-fashioned implements. The rotation of crops seemed to them as much fixed by decree of Providence as the rotation of the seasons. They looked askance on all improvements, and ignored with sublime indifference all suggestions of science. The consequence was that the ill-farmed lands yielded but a bare subsistance, while the toil was excessive. Famines were frequent, and the labourers on the soil were never raised much above starvation. But in the third quarter of the eighteenth century there was a general awakening of the agricultural mind, and new ideas began gradually to find an entrance. The farmer began to move, and straightway he discovered that the burdens which had lain so long on his shoulders were intolerable. A faint glimmering dawned on him of the radical notion that farmers do not exist for the landlords, but landlords for the farmers. He began to resent the slavish services that had been exacted from him, and to see the injustice of the impositions which his predecessors had dumbly borne. And as he emancipated himself and learned that even for him there was such a word as progress, he welcomed the new light that might lead him to increased comfort, if not to wealth. The movement

penetrated downwards to the ploughman and dairymaid, who demanded a higher remuneration for their labour, and got it. New and improved machines were gladly utilized in order to earn the additional income required to meet the enlarged expenditure. But, of course, there was no sudden passing from the old system to the new. There was a transition period, which is the time presented in the Statistical Account. The old conditions are still existent, though they are beginning to pass away. The parish ministers are evidently the leaders of the people in agriculture, as in morals and religion, and have to complain of remissness and obstinacy in the one field as in the other. One of them bluntly asserts that he considers this a natural and most fitting function of the sacred office. He thinks that if ministers had large glebes they would study agriculture scientifically, and would be able to be of much service to their parishioners, "for whatever example the minister sets, if popular, is generally much followed by them. Perhaps, too, the duties of his office cannot be more properly fulfilled than by teaching his flock by his own example habits of industry and exertion in order to better their situation in this life, which probably would not be found the worst preparation for the next, as is illustrated by

our Lord in his beautiful parable of the talents. As it is, many of the improvements in the different parishes of late years may be traced to the exertions of the clergy, in which they ought certainly to receive every possible encouragement." [1]

We shall, for convenience, arrange the information under different heads.

I.—IMPLEMENTS.

The old Scots plough was certainly not a triumph of human invention. It seemed designed, with perverse ingenuity, to accomplish the minimum of result with the maximum of labour. There were doubtless varieties, and the one here described is probably not the highest example. "The plough is made of a small crooked piece of wood, at the end of which is fixed a slender pliable piece of oak that is fastened to the yokes laid across the necks of the oxen. The man who holds the plough walks by its side and directs it with a stilt or handle fixed on the top of it. The driver goes before the oxen and pulls them on by a rope tied round their horns, and some people with spades

[1] Currie, v. 321. It is not, however, the parish minister who writes this Account, but a layman.

follow the plough to level the furrow and break the clods."[1] The description of the plough in use in another parish, though similar in details, is not quite identical. "The plough is of a singular construction. The two handles are almost perpendicular, and the ploughman therefore stands in an erect position. Four horses all in a breast pull against the beam in thongs of leather cords generally made of the skins of deer. Behind the ploughman a man follows with a spade to compress the strong furrows, which resisted the side boards. The driver confronts the ploughman, holding the reins of the horses collected in a cross stick three feet long; and in this awkward position the driver moves backward; and neither example nor precept can convince the people of a better mode of culture."[2]

One would have thought that the absurdity of the driver's—or rather the puller's—position, if not its extreme inconvenience, would have soon become manifest to the meanest capacity. But who ever discerned the absurdity of an old fashion until he had given it up? The ministers might laugh at the folly of the practice, as many of them did; but the people followed it all the same.

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[1] Delting, i., 391. [2] Kintail, vi., 248.

"The broad plough used in this parish has four horses yoked abreast, with a goadman or driver placed before the horses' heads with his face towards the ploughman; and, in this position, the driver walks backward, striking the horses in the face to make them come forward."[1] It might be thought that a plough needing so many animals to draw it, and so many human attendants must necessarily be very heavy and cumbrous. But this was by no means always the case. Here is one that was of "a peculiar structure, light and simple. It has only one stilt, and the stock is double feathered. The ploughman walks not behind the plough, but at the left side; the driver walks backward. Two horses and two oxen, four oxen, or four horses are yoked abreast in it."[2] And yet so light is it that a man can easily take it up in one hand and carry it thus for any distance. It is manifest that such agricultural implements could be made by any workman of moderate skill, and at small expense. The following seems simple and rude enough.

"A crooked piece of wood bent naturally almost to a right angle from the beam, to which is fixed a piece of oak stave about seven feet long, which

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[1] Doune, xx., 73. [2] Unst, v., 192.

must be very pliable and yield to the pressure of the driver's hand when he would deepen his fur. The coulter stands almost even up and down. There is a stilt on the top of the plough, and the man who holds it walks on the white land at the side."[1] Sometimes even the ground had to be broken up in front of the plough in order that it might work easily. The plough itself is drawn by four horses; "and before it is a machine drawn by one horse, to which is fixed a crooked iron of the form of a reaping-hook to cut the ground, so that the plough may turn it up with greater facility. The number of men and horses required to keep this plough a-going make it very expensive. It requires one man to direct the plough, and another to lead the horses, one to direct the iron that cuts the ground before the plough, and another to lead the horse that draws it."[2]

Four men and five horses employed to direct one inefficient plough! We are not surprised to hear that in many districts, its place is taken by the *crooked spade* in a man's hands. This is a machine called the *Cascroin*, literally, the crooked foot. "It is a crooked piece of wood, the lower end of which is about two and a-half feet in length

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[1] Aithsting, vii., 585. [2] North Uist, xiii., 307.

and shod at the end with a thin plate of iron. The shaft above the crook is pretty straight, being six feet long, and tapering upwards to the end. Just below the crook or angle, which is an obtuse one, there must be a hole, wherein a strong peg must be fixed for the workman's right foot in order to push the instrument into the earth, while in the meantime standing on his left foot, and holding the shaft firm with both hands. When he has in this manner driven the head far enough into the earth, with a bend of his body he raises the clod by the iron-headed part of his instrument, making use of the heel, or hind part of the head, as a fulcrum, and in so doing turns it over always towards the left hand. To see six or eight men all at work with this instrument, standing all upon one leg and pushing with the other, would be a pretty curious sight to a stranger." [1]

But it would have been a much more curious sight to a stranger to have witnessed the mode of harnessing the horses to the harrows that prevailed in some parts. The harrows are all of wood and are generally drawn by two horses. The wooden pins or teeth very soon wear out. "A barbarous practice is sometimes used, though not so common

[1] Eddrachillis, vi., 288.

as in other places, that of tying the harrows to the horses' tails. This is done to save the expense and trouble of harness, and sometimes to tame young horses,—which, indeed, it does with a vengeance."[1]

For the farm work, except in a few districts, carts are not much employed. Trail cars are generally used for removing goods, while dung was taken out to the fields in creels on horses' backs, while hay was conveyed in trusses, and peats in sacks, in the same manner.[2] In one parish, however, there is an unusual number of vehicles.

"There are about ten oxen wains in the parish, beside thirty *coops* or box-carts drawn by two horses. There are also about three hundred small *rung* carts, which are used for leading home the fuel from the moss and the corn to the barn yard. These carts have instead of wheels small solid circles of wood, between twenty and twenty-four inches in diameter, called *tumbling* wheels. It is also very common to place a coarse, strong basket, formed like a sugar-loaf, across these small carts, in which the manure is carried out to the field. These carts are called *Kellachys*, and are used over all the north."[3]

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[1] Gigha, viii. 48. [2] Torthorwald, ii. 4. [3] Kiltearn, i. 277.

Hay was very little grown anywhere. There was a prejudice against it as occupying ground that might have been used for a more important crop. "When grass was first begun to be introduced as a crop the old tenants were much offended, and their common language was that it was a shame to see beasts' meat growing where men's meat should grow."[1] The grass, of course, they dried and used for feeding purposes, and there is mention made of one way of storing it that seems singularly well fitted for the purpose for which it was designed. "It is customary to cut down a great quantity of natural grass in the month of August which, after receiving proper seasoning, is made into ropes of two fathoms in length, and then twisted two-fold. Being thus compressed it requires less room in barns, where all their crops are laid up, and is also convenient for carrying out to cattle in remote glens." In this same parish also, it is noted that "the land is divided into oxen-gates, pennies, and farthings. In the first there is room for six bolls' sowing. It is found that every penny of land, with its proportion of hill-grass ought to maintain eight milk cows, with their followers of yeld cattle, *i.e.*, three heads, including the calf, after every milk cow."[2]

[1] Methven, x. 612. [2] Kintail, vi. 249.

There is a description given of a method of preserving the corn, which is said to be peculiar to that portion of Ayrshire, although I suspect it was, and is, common enough. It is called *rickling*. "After the corn has stood some days in uncovered half stooks, from forty to sixty sheaves are gathered together and put up into a small stack (the sheaves being set up as erect as they will stick together), and covered with a large sheaf as a hood, tied down with two small straw ropes. It keeps corn and fodder to admiration."[1]

II.—CONDITIONS OF TENURE.

Under this heading we include divisions of land, rents, and other services rendered by tenants and sub-tenants. The rents were very rarely paid exclusively in money. Often a considerable amount was paid in kind—butter, milk, grain, poultry, etc. In addition, there were certain "services" that were required of almost all tenants, a number of days' labour, with all their dependents, the use of a fixed number of horses when required to carry peats or grain, and various other burdens. But while all such services were at this time

[1] Kirkmichael, vi. 104.

beginning to be resented, and the demand for the substitution of a fixed rent was becoming general, there was a very special revolt against the system of thirlage to barony mill, and blacksmith, that had once been universal. Before giving examples of the conditions imposed on the cultivators of the soil, it may be well to explain some of the peculiar terms used.

Thirlage to a mill meant not that the farmer was bound to bring all his grain to it to be ground, but that he must pay to the miller a proportion of the whole grain produced, whether ground by him or not, and even sometimes when he had not the means of grinding it.

Multure is the proportion of grain paid by the farmer to the mill to which he was thirled.

Bannock-meal, or *lick of good will*, the quantity claimed by the miller out of the meal ground.

Bonnage,[1] "a word of Gothic extraction, which means shearing corn;" an obligation on the part of the tenant to cut the proprietor's corn.

Bondage days, the number of days the tenant was bound to work for the proprietor.

Arrage, all work connected with the cultivation of the land.

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[1] Manifestly the same word as bondage.

Carriage, the use of man, or more usually horse, to convey goods, as peats, or coals: *long carriage*, a service in which more than one day was employed.

Arrage and carriage, a generic term, including all kinds of services.

Insucken, grain liable to thirlage.

Outsucken, grain not liable to thirlage.

In Shetland both the mode of measuring the land and the character of the rent exacted are peculiar. "An acre is a mode of measurement little known in this country. The old and standing mode is by merks of land, which are of very different sizes in different parts, according to their goodness. The lands have been time immemorial divided into twelvepenny, ninepenny, and sixpenny lands. Of twelvepenny lands there is three-fourths of an acre to each merk; of sixpenny land one-half acre to each merk." It must have been somewhat perplexing to have had the same word merk to represent a definite sum of money, and also a more or less indefinite extent of land. But to add to the perplexity it appears also as a weight; for we are told a merk of butter is the twenty-fourth part of a lispund, which is equal to thirty-two lbs. English. Naturally lands of different quality vary also in rent. "Twelvepenny lands pays six-

teen merks of butter and £1 4s. Scots per merk; ninepenny land pays twelve merks of butter and £1 Scots per merk; sixpenny lands pays eight merks of butter and 1s. Scots per merk" When it is paid in money each merk of butter is converted at 2½d., or 5s. a lispund. As a merk is 1⅓ English lbs. the scale of conversion does not seem extravagant. But this is not all. In addition a sum of 40d. is paid by each family in lieu of services, and a hen and a cock from every two merks of land, a hen being valued at 4d. and a cock at 2d. "Besides the above, tenants pay corn-teind, which varies from four merks of butter and one-half can of oil for each merk of land to two merks of butter and one-third can of oil. They likewise pay the cess, and certain dues called scatt, wattle, and oxpenny, which vary from 4d. or 5d. to 12d. or 13d. a merk of land."[1] This is all very complicated and the hapless tenants must often have felt that their sole privilege was to pay. Very little of the produce of their labour can have been enjoyed by themselves. But in almost every part where grain was grown thirlage was the burden that was felt to be most grievous. A very few examples will show how reasonable were the grounds of complaint.

[1] Delting, i., 397-9.

In one parish, tenants pay to proprietor of mill $\frac{1}{11}$th of all the corn they grind, and $\frac{1}{17}$th of all grain sold. This latter exaction is regarded as specially objectionable, as it includes wheat, while the proprietor has no mill capable of grinding wheat. It must be remembered that this payment is additional to the miller's charges for his work.[1] Usually it is the miller, having paid to the proprietor a rent in proportion, who receives the multure ; and there is much quarrelling about the amount he is entitled to receive. The measure used is often unstamped and of no definite context. Where there is a rigorous thirlage to the barony mill, the miller is entitled to demand "by solemn oath an account of every pea, every barley corn, every grain of oats which is daily distributed to each labourer, perhaps which is dropped to every hen." Besides the annoying nature of this searching inquisition, it is pointed out that great moral danger is incurred by this multiplicity of oaths.[2] In another parish the amount of thirlage is $\frac{1}{16}$th of all the produce of the soil in addition to excessive charges for grinding. It is pointed out that the claim of a certain number of "handfuls" or "dishfuls" of meal to the miller is not satisfactory, that it would be more

[1] New Abbey, ii., 140. [2] Barry, iv., 244.

convenient and save much dispute if the quantity were fixed. In this instance the minister complains that the produce of even his glebe was charged half multure, as if he were in some sense a tenant.[1] In one parish the multures amount "on insucken, or grain thirled, to a fifteenth part of the meal produced, on outsucken, to a twentieth part;"[2] in another "the rate of multure paid at the meal mills is generally one eleventh of victual ground;"[3] while the Abbey Mill of Paisley, that once enjoyed a most extensive thirlage, "exacts from lands thirled to it a multure of the twenty-first peck, besides dues to servants of the mill."[4] In a neighbouring parish "the thirlage to mill is one-fortieth of *grana crescentia*, seed and horse corn excepted. The miller is further entitled to a half peck for *bannock meal* out of every six firlots ground at the mill; and the multerer, or miller's servant has an amount equal to half of bannock meal for his fee."[5] In Aberdeenshire this *bannock meal* has another name, which surely must have been given as a grim joke. "Tenants pay thirlage the seventeenth peck, also multure, or the price of grinding, often the thirty-second peck. They pay

[1] Birse, ix., 125. [2] Abernyte, ix., 147. [3] Moulin, v., 64.
[4] Paisley, vii., 87. [5] Rutherglen, ix., 11.

also to the miller a *lick of good will*, or a bannock, sometimes an *unmeasured lick*." Unmeasured it might be called, as "the cog used for measuring the multurer is allowed to mend, alter, and renew as he pleases. Sometimes corn grown on farms thirled to a mill pays multure although it is ground elsewhere. These charges added together amount sometimes to one-twelfth or one-eleventh of the whole corn."[1] But the mill is not the only centre of thirlage. In one parish "yearly tax or stent is paid to ferries and smithys as well as to corn mills. Every tenant pays to the ferryman contiguous to his lands so much corn, meal, beef, and cheese. They pay in the same manner to the smith for plough irons and for shoeing horses, though they may not plough a furrow. Thirled to a mill, sometimes at a distance, every tenant must pay to the miller each seventeenth peck of the produce of his farm, even though he should have it ground at another mill, or send it unground to market."[2]

Thirlage had served its day, and was now doomed to disappear. There had been a time when it had been a quite natural and just arrangement to secure that all should unite in supporting a necessity that could not be maintained by private

[1] Rayne, xv., 116. [2] Kilbrandon, xiv., 164.

enterprise, and in whose benefits all shared; but at the period of the Statistical Account it had become an intolerable burden that men refused any longer to bear, and it was gradually abolished. So also with the other services that were demanded in lieu of rent. They too were felt to be an interference with personal liberty, and a hindrance to a man profiting by the fruit of his industry, and could not long be continued. But at this period the system was still widely in force. Some were required to provide peats for the proprietor, to manure his ground, to fetch coals for his use from the neighbouring seaport, to work for him a certain number of days in a year, in some cases one day every week;[1] some had to cut peats and carry them to their landlord's home, to plough and harrow his ground, and secure his grain before attending to their own fields, and generally to do for him whatever *Baillie work*, as it was called, that he required.[2] In other cases they were bound "to give a draught of one or more horses for a certain number of miles, or to send one or more carts for coals, or to give a day of all their reapers on notice being given them the evening before; also to pay a certain number of *Kain* fowls."[3] It is very much the same

[1] Dunnichen, i. 432. [2] Stoneykirk, ii. 53. [3] Kirkden, ii. 511.

account everywhere. The services required were such as those mentioned, "carting, winning, and loading peats, ploughing and harrowing, making hay, cutting corn, and various carriages, long and short."[1] Sometimes the amount of service is clearly defined; at other times apparently it is left quite indefinite. On one estate[2] each householder pays to the lord of the manor one hen, and also three days service in the year. These days are called suggestively "bondage days," and doubtless they were often peculiarly galling. The landlord might take the three days whenever he pleased; and when he demanded them at harvest the tenant had often grudgingly to neglect his own crops in order to secure those of his laird. In a climate where the weather cannot be depended on it was a common spectacle, the husbands employed working for their masters while the wives toiled in the field securing their own corn. This arrangement was manifestly one-sided and unjust. The landlords exacted bonnage and arrage and carriage, because they thought it too heavy a burden to engage the servants needed for their work; while in this manner they had serfs at their call when needed, and who maintained themselves when not

[1] Deskford, iv. 366. [2] Tyrie, vi. 146.

needed. Accordingly, they continued to enforce as long as they could "such Gothic services as reaping, earing, ploughing, harrowing, driving out dung, and bringing home lime and other articles to the landlord, gratis."[1]

The provision of fuel was generally an important part of the service required. Where coals were available, they had to be brought often from a considerable distance; but peats were the usual fuel. Thus, tenants were required "to carry a certain number of bolls of coals from Dundee, about twelve miles distant to proprietor's house," and in addition to give two horse-back carriages to Dundee every year, as also one full day in harvest of all their reapers.[2] In another parish beside "custom-fowl and certain long carriages, the service required the providing of *Leet-peats*, measuring 8 ft. by 12 ft. by 12 ft."[3] We may conclude by referrring to a parish in Caithness, where the impositions on the tenants were peculiarly varied. There was, of course, the usual demand to do all the master's work in providing peats, making hay, ploughing and manuring the ground, shearing and threshing the grain, etc. They paid, moreover, in kind, straw-cazzies, used as grain sacks, side-ropes

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[1] Rayne, xv. 116. [2] Kinnettles, ix. 214. [3] Rathven, xiii. 398.

made of hair for plough halters, tethers made of heather, and straw for thatch. Each of them had to winter a number of the landlord's cattle, and to provide for his household consumpt "hens and eggs, meat and teind geese, meat swine and milt gault." They paid the parsonage or great teind, that is, the tenth sheaf of the produce of their land. They had to clothe their masters as well as feed them ; to provide a quantity of wool, while their wives span a considerable amount of lint. [1]

The mode of cultivating the land was primitive, and not calculated to yield satisfactory results. A very common division of a farm was into what was called croft or infield, and outfield. "The croft consisted of a few acres nearest to the farm house, and was perpetually in crop, receiving the whole manure of the farm. The outfield was the open pasture land beyond, which was occasionally ploughed in patches for oats till it was exhausted, when it was left to rest till it recovered." [2] According to this arrangement about one half of the ground might be under crop in some places and the other half in pasture. "About one third of the land next to the houses was called infield or croft land, and was cropped alternately with oats

[1] Bower, vii. 524. [2] Paisley, vii. 84.

and barley, the whole manure being laid on with the barley. Of the outfield one third or more was in oats and the rest in pasture. Three crops of oats or sometimes four were taken, and the land was then left to rest."[1] It may readily be imagined how scanty and still scantier would be the successive crops on this unmanured ground.

A very curious division of the land was once common all over Scotland. It was known by the name of *run-rig*, or *rig and rennet*. A number of small tenants lived together in the *Town*. Of the ground which constituted their united holdings each received alternate ridges, which were changed every year. Often the whole of a parish was held in run-rig: "a common field in which the different farmers had different ridges allotted to them in different years according to the nature of their crop."[2] Such an arrangement could not fail to be exceedingly inconvenient; but it is pointed out that its object perhaps was to unite all in defence of the common property against invaders, especially in the Border counties, where they were so long exposed to sudden incursions of marauding bands.

A common sub-division of the land was into

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[1] Methven, x. 611. [2] Ayton, i. 80.

what were called *davochs.* One parish, for example, is divided into ten of these little districts.[1] The derivation of the name is said to be from *daimh*, oxen, and *ach*, a field. It originally comprised as much land as could be ploughed by eight oxen. It doubtless varied in extent in different soils. A ploughgate is usually taken as one hundred and four acres, and it contained eight oxgates, each of which accordingly would represent thirteen acres.

It was, of course, the period of small holdings; but it was also not unusual for a number of tenants to hold a farm in common, that is, not as a joint-stock business, but each working his separate share. In this latter case the rights of the individual tenants had to be strictly defined. "Where there are several small tenants upon one farm, the farm is what they call *soumed;* which means that the number of cattle it can properly maintain or pasture is ascertained, that none of the tenants may exceed his just proportion, nor overstock the farm."[2] In the uplands of Lanarkshire there was a "town" that was held and governed in a peculiar fashion. "The town consists of above twenty freedoms, which were in the form of run-rig. Each

[1] Kirkmichael, xii. 427. [2] Balquhidder, vi. 93.

freedom consisted of four or five acres of croft land parcelled out in all the different parts of the town, with the privilege of keeping a certain number of sheep, sows, and horses on the hill, or common pasture. This little republic was governed by a *birley court*, in which every proprietor of a freedom had a vote. Its main business was to fix the number of sheep, cows, and horses each proprietor should keep on the common pasture."[1] This would seem a simple business, not calling for frequent meetings ; but the court was not conducted on ordinary business principles. It was held weekly ; there was no chairman, nor was any attempt made to preserve order ; and after an hour or two had been spent in uproarious wrangling, the members invariably adjourned to the alehouse, and finished the evening in jollity.

In a parish in Dumfriesshire there survived a unique system of tenure that was of very ancient foundation. On the banks of the Annan there was a large tract of rich, fertile land, in which were four populous villages known as the Four Towns of Lochmaben. The King's kindly tenants, as they were called, held this land by udal tenure, *i.e.*, without any writings or deeds. Such

[1] Crawford, iv. 512

tenure, we are told, existed only here and in Orkney and Shetland. "The lands of Four Towns were granted by one of our kings to his household servants or garrison of the Castle, and, the property of each being small, they were allowed, as a kind of indulgence, to hold it without the necessity of charter or sasine, bare possession being a sufficient title. The tenants pay a small rent to the Viscount of Stormont, but have no charter or sasine from him. The property is transferred from one person to another by delivery and possession only; but they must be entered in the Viscount's rental-book, which is done without fee or reward. The tenants' rights were renewed by James VI. and Charles II., and confirmed by the Court of Session, and by a decree of the British House of Peers, 28th Dec., 1726, and 14th Jan., 1727."[1] Of old time the Governor of Lochmaben Castle had a special right of servitude over the neighbouring district. He was entitled, "for the maintenance of the garrison, to what was called *Laird a Mairt*, or *Lairdner Mart* cow, which was one of the best fat cows out of every parish in Annandale. It is not above sixty years since it was lifted by the Marquis of Annandale.

[1] Lochmaben, vii. 240.

The conversion of it was £20 Scots, and was lifted out of thirty-three parishes, along with thirty-nine meadow geese, and Fasten's-e'en[1] hens."

With the gradual abolition of services and other burdens on the land, there was a natural tendency to an increase of rent. I daresay the farmers grumbled, but to unprejudiced observers, like the writers of these accounts, the rise of rent did not seem a matter to be deplored. Some of them even boldly maintain that it was to the benefit of the farmer. The increase of rent, says one, "is not only without prejudice to the tenant, but often for his interest, by compelling him to vigorous exertion in improving his farm. Raising rents will always have this effect, if it is done with discretion, but when otherwise, it will have a quite contrary consequence."[2] Another argues to the same effect, and even bluntly asserts that there can be no improvement of land till rents are raised. "Farmers, like men of other professions, must be spurred on to industry by necessity. If they get a livelihood with ease, they are not anxious for wealth when accompanied with exertion."[3] When

[1] Fasten's e'en, or the eve of Lent, is the evening before Shrove Tuesday.

[2] Kinnaird, vi. 237. [3] Maryton, ix. 402.

will farmers become so enlightened as to recognize this lofty theory, and see that the sure way to become rich is to pay high rents? But a third minister takes even higher ground. He finds that the morals of his parishioners are stricter than they were in former times, and he does not hesitate to attribute this happy result "partly to the greater expense of living, and the advance of the rents, as labour and industry are among the best preventatives to vice."[1] What a gospel this were to modern landlords, when once they had got it believed and accepted,—that the more they extracted from their tenants, the greater good they did them, both for the life that now is, and for that which is to come! But the millenium is not yet.

III.—CONDITION OF FARM SERVANTS.

These Accounts afford an exact and detailed sketch of the condition of the working-classes, and especially of those employed in farm labour. It must be confessed that it is not an attractive picture that is presented. Hard and incessant toil, unrelieved by any comfort or recreation, the coarsest food, by no means unlimited in quantity,

[1] Eaglesham, ii. 123.

the meanest hovel in which to dwell, with nothing to look forward to when the life-work was ended but the miserable dole of parochial charity—such was the dark lot of the labouring poor in the days we are considering. And yet, doubtless, there were compensations, though they are hard to discover. In these humble homes the domestic virtues flourished as abundantly as in more luxurious abodes. Small as the income was, yet enough was earned out of it to pay school fees for the children: and few, save the very poorest, failed to set aside a sum for their decent burial.

There is a general consensus of opinion that the wages of all classes of labourers had considerably increased towards the end of the eighteenth century; so that it must be remembered that the rates now to be stated were much higher than those that had formerly prevailed. These varied, as might be expected, in different parts of the country. The lowest, perhaps, is found in Shetland, where the earnings of a common day labourer do not exceed sixpence a day, with food; and where ten shillings, with a pair of shoes, costing about two shillings, are considered adequate remuneration for a whole year's labour of a female

farm servant.[1] In the Western Isles things are somewhat better, though even there "the wages of servant maids are very low; from 18s. to 21s., and a pair of brogues, is the common rate for a year. In 1780 the common wages in the year for men servants were from £2 2s. to £2 10s., with four pairs of brogues."[2] In another parish it is noted that "the rise of farm servants' wages is very remarkable. When the present incumbent was settled in 1744, the half-year's wage of a man servant was from 8s. to 15s. sterling: the present rate is from £2 10s. to £3 15s. sterling."[3] One minister indicates the increase that has taken place at different dates. He professes to quote from authentic documents. In 1743 a man servant was paid £1 13s. per annum, a woman servant, 16s. 6d. In 1750 the value of the service of the man had risen to £1 19s., and of the woman to 18s. 10d.[4] In some few cases the labourer receives no money, but is paid entirely in kind. Here is an example in Orkney of the income on which a man was able somehow to support a wife and four or five children. His emoluments are these:—

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[1] Delting, i. 401
[2] Kilfinichen, xiv. 197.
[3] Bourtie, ix. 437.
[4] Moulin, v. 59.

2 acres of land free of rent, and tilled by the farmer, the produce of which may be valued at	£3	2	10
Meal, bear, a boll, equal to	1	8	0
He and his wife make 2 tons of kelp, which they sell to farms for	2	4	0
Total income,	£6	14	10

They lease a cow for which they pay annually a lispund, *i.e.*, 32 lbs. of butter, and, as this is very nearly the full quantity that the cow yields, they have only the buttermilk for their labour in tending the cow and making the butter.[1]

But as a rule, the labourer received the money earned ; and the mode of spending it was left to his own wit, or to the good management of his wife. We shall take one or two examples of slightly varying incomes, and see how they are made to meet the necessary expenditure.

In the following case,[2] the labourer has a wife and four children, the eldest of whom is thirteen, and the youngest five years. The man's wages are eightpence a day with victuals. Deducting Sundays, and two or three weeks for sickness, or tempestuous weather, he has—

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[1] Cross, vii. 486. [2] Kirkpatrick-Juxta, iv. 521.

265 working days at 8d.,	£8	16	8
The children earn	1	0	0
Charity or presents,	0	10	0
TOTAL INCOME,	£10	6	8

EXPENDITURE.

Oatmeal, 40 stones at 1s. 8d.,	£3	6	8
Butcher meat, £1 ; milk and butter, £1 5s.,	2	5	0
Wool, 2 stones, spun for clothing,	0	12	0
Barley, 4 stones, 6s. 8d.; potatoes, 10s.,	0	16	8
House rent, 16s.; peat, 7s.; salt, 4s.,	1	7	0
Shoes, 15s.; linen, aprons, etc., 10s.,	1	5	0
Lying-in and burial expenses,	0	10	0
Tools, repair of house and furniture,	0	4	4
	£10	6	8

Our second instance we take from another part of the country[1]—a labourer with wife and three children. His wages are higher than the preceding, but the children are too young to earn anything. His wife, however, finds time to do a good deal of spinning.

INCOME.

Man—48 weeks at 6s.,	£14	8	0
Woman—48 weeks spinning, at 1s. 6d.,	3	12	2
	£18	0	0

[1] Auchterderran, i. 454.

EXPENDITURE.

	£	s.	d.
2 pecks oatmeal per week—104 pecks at 11½d.,	£4	19	8
2 pecks barley or pease meal per week, 7½d.,	3	5	0
6 bolls of potatoes, at 5s.,	1	10	0
Barley for kail, 3 lbs. a week, 156 lbs.,	0	16	3
Kailyard and wretched house,	0	13	0
Milk, 4d. per week,	0	17	4
Salt, cheese, and butter,	0	12	6
Soap for washing clothes,	0	2	6
Coals and carriage,	1	0	0
Shoes to the whole family,	1	0	0
Body clothes to the man,	1	10	0
Body clothes to wife and children,	1	5	0
Worsted thread for mendings,	0	7	0
	£17	18	3

The expenditure here almost exactly balances the income, and there are certainly no superfluities. Further, there is no allowance for sickness.

There is no way in which we can obtain a more real and authentic glimpse into the domestic condition of the humblest class of the population than by studying such schemes of expenditure, that are manifestly based on actual experience. We shall add only two more instances, which though in the main similar to those already given, have each their distinctive features. In the first case[1] we have a labourer, with wife and four children, who earns the usual 6s. per week. As the expenditure that follows exceeds this amount by upwards of

[1] Dornoch, ii. 20.

£3, it must be assumed that the difference represents the joint earnings of the wife and children.

EXPENDITURE.

House and kailyard,				£1	0	0
Peats and other fuel,				0	6	0
Clothes for husband—						
Working jacket and breeches,	£0	5	0			
2 shirts, 6s.; pair of clogs, 3s.; 3 pairs stockings, 2s.,	0	11	0			
a brat, 1s.; a handkerchief, 1s. 6d.,	0	2	6			
				0	18	6
Clothes for wife—						
Petticoat, bedgown, and caps,	£0	9	0			
1 pair stockings, 1s.; clogs, 2s. 6d.; apron, 1s. 6d.; napkin, 1s. 6d.,	0	6	6			
				0	15	6
Clothes for 4 children—						
4 shirts, 8s.; 4 pair clogs, 8s.; 4 pair stockings, 4s.,				1	0	0
Other clothes for children,				0	16	0
Tear and wear of Sunday clothes,				0	10	0
School wages for children,				0	10	0
2 stones oatmeal per week, at 1s. 8d.,				8	13	4
Milk 9d., butter 3d., per week,				2	12	0
Salt, candle, thread, soap, sugar, tea,				0	13	0
Total Annual Expenditure for Household,				£17	14	4

The last instance is taken from a parish in Perthshire.[1] A ploughman with a wife and seven children, the eldest a girl of thirteen, and the second a boy—

[1] Auchterarder, iv. 40.

INCOME.

Man—1s. per day for 8 months, and 8d. for remainder,		£13	17 0
Mother and eldest girl by spinning, 1s. 6d. per week,		3	18 0
Eldest boy herding cattle,		0	18 0
Produce of his acre of ground—			
6 firlots of oats, at 13s. 6d.,	£1 0 3		
4 bolls of barley, at 14s.,	2 16 0		
6 bolls of potatoes, at 6s. 6d.,	1 6 0		
		5	2 3
Sold a calf,		0	7 0
TOTAL INCOME,		£24	2 3

EXPENDITURE.

Rent of house and land, seed and management,	£4	5 0
Cow's grass in summer, 10s.; straw in winter, 6s.,	0	16 0
Fuel, £1 5s.; 8 lbs. soap, 4s. 8d.,	1	9 8
8½ bolls of oatmeal,	6	3 3
4 bolls of barley meal,	1	17 4
Butcher meat, 18s.; 4 pks. salt, 3s. 4d.,	1	1 4
3 pints lamp oil, 3s. 6d.; candles, 2s. 2d.,	0	5 8
2 stones cheese (cow yielded milk and butter),	0	8 0
Molasses for beer, 4s. 6d.; groats and barley, 7s.,	0	11 6
Potatoes produced and consumed,	1	6 0
Whisky, small beer, and wheaten bread at the New Year,	0	3 4
Needles, pins, and thread,	0	0 10
Expenses in sickness,	0	15 0
Father's clothes, 10s.; 2 shirts, 7s.; shoes, 10s.,	1	7 0
2 pairs stockings, 4s. 6d.; wear of bonnet and kerchief, 1s.,	0	5 6
Mother's clothes, 4s.; 1 shift, 2s. 6d.; 2 aprons, 2s. 3d.,	0	8 9
Shoes and stockings, 4s.; kerchief, cap., etc., 3s.,	0	7 0
Pair of shoes to each of 7 children,	0	14 2
Clothes to 3 youngest, 9s.; to 2 next, 8s.; to 2 eldest, 10s.,	1	7 0
Shirts to 3 youngest, 2s.; to 2 next, 2s. 6d.; to 2 eldest, 3s. 4d.,	0	7 10
TOTAL EXPENDITURE,	£24	0 2

Tradesmen, it is true, were somewhat better paid. The ordinary wages of a carpenter were 1s. 6d., of a mason 1s. 8d. a day; and the joint earnings of a weaver and his wife might average 9s. a week. On the whole the following account of their food must be very nearly correct: "the food of the people consists of oatmeal porridge, oatcakes and pease bannocks, barley broth with greens and potatoes, butter milk and water. Seldom any eat butcher meat. The luxuries in which they indulge are tea, and, what is worse, whisky."[1]

We might well be tempted to regard such a mode of existence as miserable enough, and to think that these humble toilers did not receive a just remuneration for their labour. But there is another side to the picture. It must be remembered that wages were higher than they had ever previously been, and that the pursuit of agriculture yielded but little profit to the master. One minister is of opinion that servants are too well off, and are in danger of being spoiled by luxury. The complaint has a strangely modern sound, as if it had been written yesterday instead of more than a century ago. He tells us male servants receive £3 stg., boys, 20s. to 30s., and maids, 20s. to 25s.

[1] Dalmeny, i. 234.

in the half year. Day labourers receive 8d. to 1s. a day, women 6d. and 7d., and, in harvest, their food in addition. This high price of labour is one of the chief grievances of farmers. Servants are better off than their masters, and they know it. "The short term of engagement and the immoderately high wages inspire them with a pride, insolence, and indifference that would frequently require a meek and patient spirit to brook. Nice in the choice of their food to squeamishness, it must neither fall short nor exceed that exact proportion of cooking which their appetites can relish. Care, too, must be taken that no offence shall be offered them. They must sleep in the morning as long, and go to bed at night as soon, as their pleasure dictates. Expostulations are opposed by rudeness. If their behaviour is disagreeable, their masters are at liberty to provide themselves with others against the first term. And seldom do they fail to give scope to this liberty. When the term arrives, then, like birds of passage, they change their residence. In the present period of their history they seem to be the only class of subjects who enjoy the most, and abuse the freedom of the English constitution."[1]

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[1] Kirkmichael, xii. 438.

But even the extravagance which resulted from increased wages, sometimes took a form that called forth commendation. Thus one minister finds that the improvement in wages and in the manner of living has resulted in a marked increase in the amount of the church collections. The rise in wages had all taken place during the preceding twenty years, and in that period the annual collections had increased from £25 to £54. He notes that "about the year 1780 female servants and others of that rank, began first to wear ribbons. Conscious of attracting superior notice, superior charity was also displayed: and the result must have proved very considerable had it continued to keep pace with the vast improvement in the dress of both sexes, for instead of the grave and solid productions of the country, the gay clothes, silks, muslins, and printed cottons of England adorn on Sundays almost every individual."[1]

In addition to the ordinary farm labourers there are different classes of workers employed, at least in some parts of the Highlands. There are, for example, *grasskeepers*, or *chasers*, whose business it is to look after the marches on hill farms. Where the marches are bad, or perhaps are not marked

[1] Crieff, ix. 600.

out in any way, the farmer is forced to employ a chaser. He gets for his labour a horse, a cow's and a horse's grass, some sheep, and a small croft. So also there are *moor herds*, who look after their master's cattle on moors and hills, and are remunerated in the same way as chasers. There is further a kind of sub-tenants called *mealers*. "They are employed only by gentlemen. They take the arable land of a farm at so much meal yearly. Besides raising the crop they carry on the other work of the farm with whatever assistance can be given them by the tacksmen. They have the grass of two or three cows, and some sheep. They furnish half the labouring horses. They are fed by the tacksmen every day; and he employs them at any work except what concerns the crop." [1]

IV.—MISCELLANEA.

For a long time the farmers were so slatternly in their operations, and so negligent in cleaning the soil that every crop they produced was overrun with weeds. Very often the weeds bulked much more largely than the crop. There was especially one weed called gool, the wild chrysan-

[1] Kilfinichen, xiv., 197.

themum, that seemed to have spread over the whole county, and was exceedingly difficult to eradicate. From about the earliest period of which we have documentary evidence we find regulations made dealing severely with all farmers who suffered the obnoxious gool to grow in his fields. The monks, to whose fostering care agriculture in Scotland owed so much, refused to tolerate any tenant on church or Abbey lands who allowed a single head of gool to pollute his fields. Very severe was the punishment inflicted on the offender, extending to confiscation of all his goods, or even to death on occasion of gross and repeated negligence. In later times a fine continued to be imposed on any one on whose fields a stalk of gool was found. Gool Courts were established in many baronies for the purpose of inflicting this fine; and, in order that none might escape, there was a custom of periodically inspecting all the lands in a parish, called gool-riding, that every transgressor might be brought to justice. Some few traces of the survival of this practice are to be found in the Statistical Account. In Dumfriesshire "the late Sir William Grierson of Lag was so attentive to have his land clear of weeds that he held gool courts as long as he lived for the purpose

of fining the farmers in whose growing crop three heads or upwards of the weed was found." [1]

Again, in a parish in Perthshire, the old custom of gool-riding was regularly observed. "The lands of Cargill were formerly so very much overrun by a weed with a yellow flower, that grows among the corn, especially in wet seasons, called gool, and which had the most pernicious effects not only upon the corn while growing, but also in preventing its winnowing after cut down, that it was found absolutely necessary to adopt some effectual method of extirpating it altogether. Accordingly, after allowing a reasonable time for procuring clean seed from other quarters, an act of the Baron Court was passed, enforcing an old Act of Parliament to the same effect, imposing a fine of 3s. 4d., or a wedder sheep, on the tenants for every stock of gool that should be found growing among their corn at a particular day, and certain persons, styled gool-riders, were appointed to ride through the fields, search for gool, and carry the law into execution when they discovered it. Though the fine of a wedder sheep originally imposed for every stock of gool found growing in the barony is now commuted and reduced to one penny sterling, the

[1] Torthorwald, ii., 4.

practice of gool-riding is still kept up, and the fine rigidly exacted. The effects of this baronial regulation have been salutary beyond what could well have been expected. Five stocks of gool were formerly said to grow for every stock of corn through all the lands of the barony, and twenty threaves of barley did not then produce one boll. Now, the grounds are so cleaned from this noxious weed that the corn is in high request for seed; and, after the most diligent search, the gool-riders can hardly discover as many growing stocks of gool, the fine for which will afford them a dinner and a drink. Similar regulations in other places might be productive of the most beneficial effects."[1]

Weeds suggest vermin, and what the former were to the farmer's growing crops, the latter were felt to be to his flocks, and the same principle of exterminating the enemy was sought to be carried out in both cases. The old conception of a fox-hunter differs greatly from that which holds at present. Reynard enjoyed no protection from the sporting fraternity, and he who did him to death by trap, or poison, or any other method, was recognized as a public benefactor. The master of the hounds was a public official, receiving his

[1] Cargill, xiii. 537.

proper pay and other perquisites. For example, in one district of Argyllshire foxes were found to be so dangerous to sheep that the neighbouring parishes "joined in supporting a fox-hunter and a pack of dogs. The fox-hunter received a fixed salary, and, as he was continually perambulating the county, every tacksman and tenant was obliged to entertain him and his dogs a specified number of nights in the year according to the extent of land he held. In consequence of this establishment, a fox is now seldom seen."[1] The fox-hunter was to be found in every district, though in some places the more economical method of poisoning was adopted. *Nux vomica* was used for the purpose.[2] Societies for exterminating foxes were formed in different parts of the counties of Aberdeen, Dumfries, Sutherland, and elsewhere.[5] In the district round Golspie "upwards of £100 sterling is yearly expended for the purpose of extirpating that noxious animal, that kills young deer and sheep and moorfowl."[3]

This reference to vermin recalls an astonishing statement that is made regarding a beautiful parish

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[1] Lochgoilhead, iii. 176. [2] Lochlee, v. 364.

[3] Midmar, ii. 518; Lumphanan, vi. 385; Kirkpatrick, iv. 532; Eddrachilliis, vi. 284.

on the Clyde,[1] that rats cannot exist in it. "Many of these have at different times been accidentally imported from vessels lying upon the shore, but were never known to live twelve months in the place. From a prevailing opinion that the soil of the parish is hostile to that animal, a West India planter some time ago actually carried out to Jamaica several casks of Rosneath earth with a view to kill the rats that were destroying his sugar canes. It is said this had not the desired effect, so that Rosneath lost what must have proved a very valuable export. Had the experiment succeeded, perhaps by this time the parish might have been no more; a consummation, doubtless, that would have been deeply deplored."

In some parts of Galloway it is noticeable that the hills bear traces of having been at one time under cultivation, even to their very summits. A curious explanation of this is given, which is possibly not without some foundation in fact. "The tradition that at a time when Scotland was under a Papal interdict, or sentence of cursing from the Pope, it was found that His Holiness had forgotten to curse the hills, though he had commanded the land usually arable to yield no increase, and that

[1] Rosneath, iv. 76.

while this sentence remained, the people were necessitated to seek tillage ground in places unusual and improbable." [1]

A minister in the same district of the country wittily scores a point against the learned Dr. Johnson. His parish was famous for breeding cattle. The recommendation of a cow is not that she gives much milk, but that she brings up a good beast—hence the local saying that "a good farmer would rather kill his old son than kill a calf." It was in regard to these sacred animals that Dr. Johnson, in his account of his journey to the Western Islands, ventured to speak with insufficient knowledge. "Of their black cattle," he says, "some are without horns, called by the Scots humble cows, as we call a bee a humble bee that wants a sting. We are not very sure that the bull is ever without horns, though we have been told that such things are. What is produced by putting a horned male and unhorned female together no man has ever tried who thought the result worthy of observation." The minister seizes the opportunity thus afforded, and uses it neatly. With an air of modesty he remarks :—"though it may savour of arrogance, this high authority must be flatly con-

[1] Buittle, xvii. 115.

tradicted. There is not within the bounds of this parish a single bull with horns. The experiment the philosopher wished for has been tried a thousand times, and the result has been found to be a *calf* sometimes with and sometimes without horns, but never, as the Doctor most probably expected, a *unicorn*." [1]

[1] Crossmichael, i. 180.

Domestic and Social.

DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL.

Condition of labourers—beginnings of improvement—details of progress in Tongland—prices of provisions—extravagance in dress—hats and watches—food of labouring class—general complaint of use of tea—of whisky—of tobacco—great evils resulting from tea—complaint of bad whisky—condition of fisherwomen—their work—amusements of people—few holidays—curious amusement at Elgin—Christmas, New Year, Handsel Monday observed—influence of Dr. Carlyle—Story of Home's *Douglas*—Hallowe'en—Beltane—archery—cock-fighting—annual game at Scone—curling—golf—rocking—Maiden Feast—a Daubing—a Drinking.

THE Statistical Accounts are, as a rule, concerned only with the condition of the great body of the working people. They tell us very little of the manner of living of the professional class, or of the higher grades of society. But of the labourer's cottage they give us many and interesting glimpses. We have minute details of domestic economy, daily food and rare luxuries, of work-a-day and holiday attire, of general walk and conversation. Most of the narrators are in thorough sympathy with their humble parishioners, but they are by no means blind to their faults, or slow to condemn them. There is a general agreement that much progress

had been made during the preceding fifty years, and not rarely is a warning added against the danger of being led astray by new fashions. Foreign articles of food and dress are looked on with suspicion, and the fear is frequently expressed that the departure in these respects from the simpler habits of their forefathers may lead the people into excesses harmful alike to their purses and their morals. The immoderate use of whisky is often the subject of censure ; but it is noticeable that tea-drinking is regarded as not less mischievous than dram-drinking. The women are naturally the chief offenders in regard to the vanities of dress, though the men too are not without blame in this matter. These latter often have English hats instead of Kilmarnock bonnets for kirk and other dress occasions, and many of them have actually watches in their fobs. But the luxuries that are described as characteristic of the times serve also as a measure of the extreme simplicity, if not rudeness, of the former days. One minister in Galloway gives an unusually full and interesting account of the former condition of his parish in order to show the great progress in civilisation that had been made. He declares it to be an "authentic sketch of the Statistical state of the parish about sixty or seventy

years ago;" and it bears all the marks of being written out of a very full and exact knowledge. "At the above period there was not a hat to be seen in the whole congregation on a Sunday. They wore Kilmarnock bonnets, or caps of different colours. In church they kept on their bonnets and caps during the lecture and sermon, and took them off only during the prayer, the singing of psalms, and the pronouncing the blessing. Few or none of the common people could read, and the precentor read the Scriptures to them in church before the minister made his appearance. They had no buckles in their shoes, but tied them with small leathern thongs; had no metal buttons on their clothes, but large clumsy buttons of wood moulds, covered over with the same cloth as the coat. The men wore kelt coats made of a mixture of black and white wool as it came off the sheep in its natural state. Neither men nor women in general wore any shirts, and when they did they were made of coarse woollen; in general, they changed their plaiding shirts twice in the year—at Whitsunday and Martinmas. It was long before linen shirts came into use among the vulgar. They wore no shoes in summer, nor in winter but in the time of severe frost and snow. Their children got no shoes till they were able to go to the kirk. The

women wore coarse plaiding or drugget gowns, made of the coarsest wool and spun in the coarsest manner. The tenants' wives wore toys of linen of the coarsest kind on their heads when they went to church, fairs, or market. At home they wore toys of coarse plaiding. The young girls wore linen mutches, with a few plaits in them above their foreheads when they went abroad to church or to fairs or market. At home they went bareheaded, with their hair snooded back on the crown of their head with a woollen string in the form of a garter. Their houses were the most miserable hovels built of stone and turf without mortar, and stopped with fog or straw to keep the wind from blowing in upon them. They had a window on each side of the house, which they opened or shut as the wind blew, to give them light. These windows were stopped with straw or fern. In such houses when they kindled a fire they lived in a constant cloud of smoke enough to suffocate them, had they not been habituated to it from their infancy. They had many of them no standing beds, but slept on heath and straw upon the floor, covered with the coarsest blankets. They kept their cattle in the same house with themselves, tied to stakes in one end of the house. There was no division to separate the cattle from themselves. Their furniture consisted

of stools, pots, wooden cogs, and bikkers. At their meals they ate and supped altogether out of one dish. They lived in a coarse and dirty manner, and ate of the meanest and coarsest food. In general, their food consisted of brose, pottage, oat-meal flummery, and greens boiled in water with a a little salt. The dishes out of which they fed were seldom washed after meals, and of course were often thick with dirt. Each person in the family had a short-hafted spoon made of horn, which they called a munn, with which they supped, and carried it in their pocket or hung it by their side. They had no knives and forks, but lifted the butcher meat they ate with their fingers. They ate little meat at that time excepting the off-falls of their flocks, which died either by poverty or disease. The women carried out dung in creels on their backs, and the men filled the creels at the dunghill, and lifted it upon their shoulders. This resembled the savage state of society when all the drudgery of the domestic labour fell to the department of the female sex. At that time there were no saddles nor bridles, and they rode to church or market upon brechams and pillions placed on the horses, and halters on the horses' heads made of hair. They shod their horses' fore feet, but put no shoes on their hind feet. They had no candles to

give them lights in the winter nights. When the good man of the house made family worship, they lighted a ruffy to enable him to read the psalm and the portion of Scripture before he prayed. The men had no razors, but clipped their beards every Saturday night with scissors to appear more decent upon the Sunday. Both men and women were robust and healthy, and subject to few diseases. They were strangers to every complaint of a nervous nature."[1]

It were impossible for the most prejudiced *laudator temporis acti* to admire such conditions as are here described; but in one respect, at least, he might justly maintain that the former days were better than these. Formerly the necessaries, and even the luxuries of existence were much more abundantly within the reach of a moderate income. Here is some indication of the advance of prices within half a century :—

In 1748 beef and mutton cost 1d. or 1½d. per lb., in 1798 it had risen to 5½d. or 6d. A hen, with a dozen eggs thrown in, cost 1s. 4d. to 1s. 9d., which fifty years before might have been bought for 4d. In the same period the price of a dozen eggs had risen from 1d. to 4d. or even 6d., a pair of geese

[1] Tongland, ix. 324-9.

from 2s. to 5s. 6d., a turkey from 3s. to 7s., a pair of pigeons from 1½d. to 6d., 14 haddocks from 1½d. to 1s. 6d., and a bottle of good claret from 1s. to 6s.[1]

A good deal is said, mostly in tones more or less condemnatory, of the change in dress that was taking place among the humbler classes. It even affords opportunity of fine writing to some of the clerical narrators, as for example, the minister of Symington. He testifies of his people that "they have a taste for dress, and young women of the middle and even of the lower ranks would now blush to be seen in the blue cloaks, red plaids, and plain caps which, only twenty years ago, adorned their sex. Nay, even the scarlet mantle, which lately was a badge of distinction among the daughters of farmers, is now despised; and, O tempora! O mores! the silk worms of the East must be pillaged to deck the heads and shoulders of our milk-maids. The bonnet makers of Kilmarnock are neglected; hats are worn both by men and boys of all ranks. Our young men are not to be seen at church or market in a coat of their mother's spinning, but dress themselves in English broad-cloth, fashionable cotton stripes, and

[1] Banff, xx. 364.

fine linen : and every stripling must have a watch in his pocket." [1]

Another, in a different part of the country, has a similar tale to tell of the encroachment of modern fashions. "The mode of dress within these twenty or thirty years past has undergone a very considerable alteration. Formerly the women of inferior stations appeared at church on Sunday in bed blankets or tartan plaids ; but now they wear scarlet plaids or duffle cloaks and bonnets ; and maid-servants are sometimes as well dressed as their mistresses. Formerly farmers and respectable tradesmen were contented with the blue bonnet, and with say for their best clothes, but now, not only farmers and master tradesmen, but farm servants, apprentices, and cottagers frequently appear at kirk and market in hats and English broad-cloth. Formerly clocks and watches were not used in the parish, excepting, perhaps, by the laird or minister ; but now, in general, every farmer has his eight-day clock, and almost every servant has his watch." [2]

It is the same everywhere. A Dumfriesshire minister writes :—"Fifty years ago silk and cotton were very rarely to be seen ; now a servant-maid

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[1] Symington, v. 403. [2] Logie Pert, ix. 50.

can't be in dress without both. There was then no watch in the parish but the minister's; now there is scarcely a man-servant who is without one. Clocks, mostly of wood, are also very common." [1]

The giving up of the Kilmarnock bonnet, the most economical of all head coverings, seems to have been specially regretted. One narrator tells a story of a hatter who came to his parish hoping to introduce the fashionable hat. He chanced to arrive on a Saturday, and of course on the following day he appeared in church. There to his dismay he found that there were only three hats besides his own. He was so much disappointed by the little prospect held out for the exercise of his trade that he forthwith returned to Edinburgh. This had taken place some eighteen or twenty years previously, "but," it is pathetically added, "were he now here he would hardly see a single bonnet in the whole congregation." [2]

The minister of Kirkmichael, in Banffshire, who gives so full an account of his parish, does not fail to note the subject of dress. He calls attention to the fact that after the rebellion of 1745 the Highland dress was proscribed by the Government.

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[1] Kirkpatrick-Juxta, iv. 523. [2] Laurencekirk, v. 181.

He thinks it an absurd policy, but neither has he much to say in praise of Mr. Fraser of Lovat, who got the prohibitory Act repealed. The people had become used to Lowland garments, and had no wish to resume the ancient garb. "The blue bonnet, however, with the exception of some round hats, still maintains its ground. The women, too, since 1745, have altered considerably in their apparel. Before that period they wore sometimes white blankets covering their heads, sometimes their shoulders, drawn forward by their hands and surrounded on each side by a fold. These, as fashion varied, were succeeded by barred plaids or blankets, whose different colours blended, crossing each other at right angles, somewhat distant, and bearing a square space in the middle. Wearied of barred plaids they betook themselves to Stirling ones, and now duffle cardinals began to have the ascendant. Formerly their hair flowed in easy ringlets over their shoulders ; not many years ago it was bound behind into a cue ; now it spreads into a protuberance on the forehead, supported by cushions ; sometimes it is plain, and split in the middle. But who can describe the caprice of female ornament, more various than the changes of the moon!"[1]

[1] Kirkmichael, xii. 467-8.

In regard to food the following may be taken as a fair account of the average manner of living among the working classes. "The diet of the labouring people here, and in general through the lowlands of the North of Scotland, is porridge made of oatmeal, with milk or beer to breakfast; sowens, that is a kind of flummery made of oatmeal, somewhat soured, with milk or beer, to dinner; and kail, that is greens and cabbage boiled with oatmeal, to supper. With all these they use bread of oatmeal, or what is called household meal, that is, some mixture of barley, rye, and pease. On Sundays they have generally barley broth, with some meat in winter and butter in summer, In places near the coast they have sometimes fish. Turnips are sometimes used in place of cabbage or greens; and potatoes, dressed in different ways, with butter, milk, onions, etc., is commonly one third part of their food from the beginning of September to end of March. The cottagers and poorer sort of the people have not always what is called kitchen, that is milk or beer, to their meals. In the view of patriotism and humanity it is a pity that the article of beer cannot be rendered more attainable by the poorer sort of people." [1]

[1] Speymouth, xiv. 400.

So far as can be gathered from these accounts, the only luxuries indulged in were tea, tobacco, and whisky, and of the three, the strongest and most universal censure is, curiously enough, reserved for the first. It is pretty generally admitted that a considerable change had taken place in recent years in the manner, dress, and way of living of the people. "Formerly," says one, "there was little beef or mutton used. Even a farmer's family thought themselves sufficiently provided in flesh-meat with one old ewe killed about Christmas. For such a family at present sixteen stones of beef and two good sheep are considered a moderate provision. Prior to the year 1745 there was not a tea-kettle within the parish except the minister's; now there is not a farm house without one, and several of the sub-tenants use the same piece of furniture."[1] As an indication of the change of manners, it is noted that a few years previously "a watch, an eight-day clock, or a tea-kettle were scarcely to be met with, while at present there are few houses without one or other of these articles; perhaps one half of the families in the parish are possessed of all of them."[2] That it was not always

[1] Lethnot, iv. 20. [2] Cupar-Angus, xvii. 12.

so is shown by this authentic story. "About fifty years ago, the Excise officer's family was the only one in Johnshaven that made use of tea. When the kettle was carried to the well to bring in water, numbers both of children and grown people followed it, expressing their wonder and supposing it to be 'a beast with a horn.' In those days of simplicity, a watch or an eight-day clock would have created equal surprise. Now the tea-kettle has lost the power of astonishing, having become a necessary piece of furniture among the meanest, and one can scarcely enter a house where he is not put in mind of the fleeting of time from some one corner of it."[1] In the town of Crieff, the consumpt of tea and sugar had gone on increasing till in 1792 it was found there had been imported for the use of the inhabitants 5015 lbs. of tea at a cost of £983 6s. 8d., or nearly 4s. per lb., and 780 cwts. of sugar, one-third of it from London and two-thirds of it from Glasgow, which cost £4095, about 11¼d. per lb. The minister loses his patience over the obstinacy of his people in giving up the wholesome drink of their country for what he considers so deleterious a drug as tea. "Bewitched by the mollifying influ-

[1] Benholme, xv. 239.

ence of an enfeebling potion, the very poorest classes begin to regard it as one of the necessaries of life, and for its sake resign the cheaper and more invigorating nourishment which the products of their own country afford."[1] Among the objects of interest in one parish, there is pointed out in the village of Closeburn the ruins of a house in which it is said the first tea was drunk in Scotland, at end of seventeenth century. "It had been brought from Holland, according to the tradition, by Sir Andrew Kennedy, who was then proprietor of that part of the parish: and who, being Lord Conservator of the Scots Privileges at Campvere, had received it as a present from the Dutch East India Company."[2] It is curious to observe how the use of it had spread over the whole country, and how almost universally it receives the same condemnation as the immoderate drinking of whisky. Indeed, of the two vices, the latter is often deemed the less objectionable. Even in the most remote parts, as for example in Orkney and Shetland, the evil practice has spread. "The immoderate consumpt of tea and spirituous liquors is a great ruin to the health and circumstances of the inhabitants. It would be impossible to carry on the fishing

[1] Crieff, ix. 594. [2] Pettinain, xii. 41.

without gin; but the small retail shops in the parish are a great nuisance and ruin."[1] Again, in the neighbouring parish, the increase of various diseases is ascribed "to the change in the mode of living, especially to the general use of tea, of which the consumption is amazing, even in the poorest families, who will stint themselves in many essential necessaries of life in order to procure this article of luxury."[2] Again, in the same northern regions, we read with amazement that the inhabitants are given to indulging in the luxuries of life and all kinds of extravagance. The increased price they get for their produce does them no good; "they are so addicted to dress, spirituous liquors, and tea, that a considerable part of their gain is spent in that way."[3]

Coming further south, we find the same state of matters. In the town of Forres, "fifty years ago there were only three tea-kettles; at present there are not less than 300."[4] In the same district we hear the mournful reflection that though the mode of living has altered much, the change is not for the better. "The drinking of whisky instead of good ale is a miserable change, and so likewise is

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[1] Aithsting & Sandsting, vii. 595.
[2] Delting, i. 386.
[3] North Yell and Fetlar, xiii. 290.
[4] Forres, xvii. 450.

the very general use of tea. These put together have been exceedingly hurtful both to health and morals. It will probably be considered as a pretty curious fact that, instead of two or three tea-kettles about sixty years ago, perhaps one for the laird, another for the parson, and a third for the factor, there are here now two hundred at least."[1] In the same county there is a parish where "no monopolies are established, no restraints upon the industry of the community. All of them sell whisky, and all of them drink it." Some of them have grown luxurious, and must have their whisky diluted with hot water and sweetened with sugar. In justice, however, to the parishioners, it is noted that "they seldom indulge in this beverage; they oftener drink the spirit raw and unmixed. It may easily be supposed that a plant of such universal consumption as tea should not be unknown to the people of this country. Few of the better families are without it, though sparingly used; and some of the old women, even when they cannot afford sugar, infuse it in boiling water and drink it for their headaches. These headaches frequently return, but, fortunately, by the aid of the grand elixir, they are seldom of long duration."[2]

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[1] Mortlach, xvii. 438. [2] Kirkmichael, xii. 469.

Again, in Forfarshire, there is the same advance in the manner of living, and addiction to the same luxuries. "Formerly butcher meat was seldom or never used by the lower or middling ranks except about Christmas, but now it is no unfrequent article at any season of the year. Excepting in the houses of persons of property, or in a genteel station, tea was unknown; but now there is scarcely a house in the parish, except those in indigent circumstances, in which tea is not used at least once a week, and by many of the farmers twice a day."[1] In another Forfarshire parish several circumstances are noted as indications of the change in living in fifty years. One of these is that while few farmers at that time drank tea, it had now become common among the the poorest people. Another indication is that knives and forks, which had previously been unknown, had come into general use. Fifty years before there were not six watches among the farmers, "now many of the men servants have them, and there are above a hundred watches, and about eighty clocks in the parish. Then it was common for the farmer and his wife to eat at the same table with the servants; now they eat in a separate room."[2]

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[1] Logie Pert, ix. 50. [2] St. Vigeans, xii. 184.

Again, in the County of Berwick, we are told "the only extravagance the people are guilty of is their breakfasting upon tea in place of pottage, the constant morning diet of their more athletic ancestors, which debilitates them, and (here I do not include the principal families) the immoderate use of whisky, which too many of the lower class are guilty of, which destroys them. This is owing to the cheapness of these two superfluous and pernicious articles, which appear to be objects more fit for taxation than coals, candles, leather, and soap, which are as necessary in the poorest families as their meal and milk."[1] A minister in East Lothian notes that, though "the mode of living has become more expensive than formerly among the farmers, the lowest class of people confine their taste and expense to their dress;" and he takes comfort from the reflection that, after all, "this rage for finery is much more harmless in every point of view than tea and dram drinking, which pervade almost every town and great village."[2]

In a parish in Stirlingshire, in which, we are led to believe, the population are remarkable for sobriety and every virtue—why, the minister's

[1] Coldingham, xii. 55. [2] Pencaitland, xvii. 44.

garden is near the high road, and yet in seven years he has not been robbed of a single apple!—alas, "tea is universally used." They are even epicures in its use. "Even the poorest families have it occasionally, and the last cup is qualified with a little whisky which is supposed to correct all the bad effects of the tea."[1] All kinds of evil are attributed to the introduction of the foreign herb. In one parish there has been a marked increase in consumption and nervous complaints, which is naturally accounted for by the "immoderate use of spirituous liquors, and the introduction of tea of the worst quality. It is drunk too hot, and produces fatal effects on the nervous system."[2] In another parish, the increasing number of the poor on the roll of paupers is unhesitatingly ascribed "to the too common use of tea, and the immoderate use of whisky."[3] In a neighbouring parish it is stated, "tradesmen and labourers in the village are addicted to the pernicious habit of using tea, a habit inimical to health, industry, and morals."[4]

There is general regret that the national beverage, beer, has been in a large measure given up.

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[1] Gargunnock, xviii. 121.
[2] Stow, vii. 134.
[3] Coldingham, xii. 48.
[4] Ayton, i. 87.

In a parish near Edinburgh, the people, who aforetime were sober, industrious, and economical, are becoming affected with the vices of the capital. "The introduction of these baneful articles to the poor, tea and whisky, will soon produce corruption of morals and debility of constitution. The introduction of these is the effect of the present practice of debasing and vitiating malt liquor. Formerly when that liquor was the only beverage in use excesses from it did not affect the constitution, as it contained a good deal of nourishment. Now tea is substituted in its place, and it is not uncommon to see a labouring man here dining upon it."[1]

These were not the days of teetotal societies; but there were those who were eager to call in the aid of legislation to limit the manufacture of whisky. Says one: "Had all the fabled ills emitted from Pandora's box been realised they could not have produced more deplorable effects than when whisky, of all liquors the most subversive of the health, the industry, and the morals of the people, became so cheap and so common as to supersede the drinking of beer, the good old wholesome beverage of our fathers. Religion,

[1] Currie, v. 327.

morality, health, and industry are the dreadful sacrifices ; and till the British Legislature, following the example of Ireland, shall interpose by laying a tax upon it amounting to a prohibition, they will daily increase. . . . Beer is the natural and wholesome beverage of the country. Instead of inflaming the passions and prompting men to the commission of every crime, like whisky, beer nourishes the body without producing any dismal effects." [1]

But there were those then, as there are now, who maintained that the evil lay not in whisky, but in bad whisky. One frankly confesses that "whisky is the only spirituous liquor that is used or can be afforded. About sixteen years ago they could buy it very good in quality from 1s. 10d. to 2s. 2d. per pint, *i.e.*, sixteen gills ; but now they pay 3s. 6d. for the same quantity, but much worse in quality. It is, indeed, worthy the attention of the Legislature to endeavour to correct an abuse which has been introduced into this kind of traffic, and which is now arrived at the most alarming height. Whisky is a spirit distilled from malt, and when properly done it is esteemed by some as very little inferior to rum ; but for some years it

[1] Langholm, xiii. 603.

has very much changed its taste and flavour. It is supposed either that proper attention is not paid to it at the time of distilling, or that afterwards it is mixed with some pernicious ingredients very destructive to the bowels, and to the health and constitution of those who drink it."[1]

In the higher circles, however, it would appear that the drinking habits have improved. In a list of the changes that have taken place in fifty years it is noted among other things that while in 1748 "a joyous company after dinner have been seen quaffing the wine of a dozen bottles from a single glass," now in 1798 "a sober party sometimes meet, whose libation consists of a solitary bottle with a dozen glasses."[2] Perhaps, however, the point to which attention is here called is not so much the decrease in the amount consumed as the luxury in the use of so many drinking vessels.

Tobacco also obtains its share of condemnation, though manifestly it was not in so general use. One minister, after giving his people high commendation, goes on:—"I do not mean here to affirm that we are free from excess of every kind. All classes exceed in the use of tea and tobacco, particularly of the latter, as it is consumed in snuff-

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[1] Marykirk, xviii. 636. [2] Banff, xx. 364.

ing, chewing, and smoking. This last species of coarse luxury is too much practised by both sexes. I have known some persons so much enslaved to it that they carried their tobacco-pipe with them on Sunday for the purpose of smoking on the way to and from church." He especially regrets that so much money should be sent out of the country to procure this "very pernicious article of luxury." He suggests therefore the use of camomile flowers as a substitute, which he alleges would yield as agreeable a flavour and do less harm.[1] The worthy parson was manifestly not a smoker. It is curious to find the women almost worse offenders than the men. In a Perthshire parish "the chief luxuries are snuff, tobacco, and whisky. Tea and sugar are little used, but the use of whisky has become very great. The use of tobacco may almost be said to be excessive, especially among the female sex. There is scarce a young woman by the time she has been taught to spin, but has also learned to smoke. Smoking seems to have been introduced as an antidote to rheumatism and ague; the favourable alteration, however, with respect to these diseases, has produced only a greater avidity for this indulgence."[2]

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[1] Peterculter, xvi. 372. [2] Abernyte, ix. 148.

The fisher folk are everywhere a class by themselves, with their own peculiar customs and manner of life. The nature of their employment produces domestic conditions quite different from those prevailing among tillers of the soil. We have a few interesting glimpses of them that are worth preserving. Notable especially are the character of the women, and the duties that fall to them. Here is how a minister in Ross-shire speaks of them:— "The fisher women are in general hardy and robust, and can bear immense burdens. Some of them will carry a hundredweight of wet fish a good many miles up the country. As the bay is flat, and no pier has as yet been built, so that the boats must often take ground a good way off from the shore, these poissardes have a peculiar custom of carrying out and in their husbands on their backs, 'to keep their men's feet dry,' as they say. They bring out in like manner all the fish and fishing tackle, and at these operations they never repine to wade in all weather a considerable distance into the water. Hard as this usage must appear, yet there are few other women so cleanly, healthy, or so long livers in the country." [1]

This is no exceptional testimony. On every

[1] Avoch, xv. 637.

part of the coast we hear of the good behaviour of the fisher folk, and of the industry, physical powers, and comeliness of their women. With all their outspokenness, and even roughness, of language, they were remarkable then, as I believe they are still, for their chastity. They generally marry very young, and rarely out of their own profession, not so much from a feeling of caste as from the fact that only those trained in fishermen's houses are qualified to fulfil the duties of fishermen's wives. These wives work very hard, but they do not seem to suffer from their excessive toil. Here is an account of them in a Banffshire village :—"They lead a most laborious life. They assist in dragging the boats on the beach, and in launching them. They sometimes, in frosty weather and at unseasonable hours, carry their husbands on board and ashore again to keep them dry. They receive the fish from the boats, carry them fresh or salted to their customers, and to market at the distance often of many miles through bad roads and in a stormy season. When northerly winds or a high sea prevent the boats from going a-fishing, the men are employed in repairing their sails, mending their lines, or making new ones. It is the province of the women to bait the lines, collect furze, heath, or the gleanings of the mosses, which in surprising

quantity they carry home in their creels for fuel to make the scanty stock of peats and turfs prepared in summer last till the returning season. The men and women are in general remarkably stout and well-shaped. Many of the former are above the common stature, and of the latter many are pretty, and dress to advantage on holidays. The fishers of Findochtie are distinguished for decency and decorum, and for curing their fish superlatively well." [1]

But perhaps the most interesting account of the fisherwomen and their habits is that given by the minister of Inveresk, Dr. Alex. Carlyle, or Jupiter Carlyle, as he was generally called, one of the most notable men of his day. We have already quoted from his narrative ; but here is what he says about his humble female parishioners :—" The fish wives are all of one class, and educated in it from their infancy. Great part of their business is to gather bait for their husbands and bait their lines. Four days in the week, however, they carry fish in creels (osier baskets) to Edinburgh ; and when the boats come in late in the forenoon to the harbour, so as to leave them no more than time to reach Edinburgh before dinner, it is not unusual for them to

[1] Rathven, xiii. 424.

perform this journey of five miles by relays, three of them being employed in carrying one basket, and shifting it from one to another every hundred yards, by which means they have been known to arrive in the Fish Market in less than three-quarters of an hour. It is a well-attested fact that three of them, not many years ago, went from Dunbar to Edinburgh, which is twenty-seven miles, with each of them a load of herrings on her back of 200 lbs., in five hours. They sometimes carry loads of 250 lbs. From the kind of life these women lead it may naturally be concluded that their manners are peculiar, as they certainly are. Having so great a share in the maintenance of the family, they have no small sway in it. When speaking of a young woman reported to be about to be married, they will say—'Hout! how can she keep a man, who can hardly maintain herself?' Their amusements are of the masculine kind. On holidays they play golf and football. There seems to be no employment that conduces more to health and good spirits than theirs. They never wear shoes or stockings but on Sundays, not from poverty but from pleasure. They gain at least one shilling a day, and frequently double or triple that sum." But there are women in the parish whose lot is much harder than that of

the fishermen's wives and daughters. They are virtually the bread-winners of the household, and do all the hard work of carrying burdens; and this circumstance has brought about a rather peculiar domestic condition. "This employment of women has occasioned a reversal of the state of the sexes in this parish. The carriers of greens, salt, etc., are generally the wives of weavers, shoemakers, tailors, or sievemakers, who take charge of the children and family while the females trudge to Edinburgh about their several branches of business long before day in winter, and return by midday or later, according to the time spent in selling their commodities. Their usual daily profits may be computed at from 8d. to 1s. 3d. The women who carry sand to Edinburgh have the hardest labour and earn least. They carry their burden, which is not less than 200 lbs., every morning to Edinburgh, return at noon, and spend the afternoon and evening in the quarry digging the stones and beating them into sand. By this labour, which is incessant for six days in the week, they gain only about 5d. a day."[1]

Of the amusements of the people the statistical accounts have singularly little to tell. The im-

[1] Inveresk, xvi. 16-20.

pression made upon us is that the labouring poor had but little time for recreation, and that enjoyment was not considered any real part of the business of life. The following description of the inhabitants of one parish may, with exceptions, be applied generally. "Their general character is that of a sober, honest, peaceable people, regular in their attendance on the ordinances of religion, rather grave than lively, seldom indulging themselves in any relaxation or diversion, excepting the young people, who sometimes take a dance at Christmas or at a penny wedding."[1] Of the proceedings at a penny wedding we give some account elsewhere. It is true that all are not so solemn, or have so peculiar a conception of pleasure, as the inhabitants of a parish in Elgin, who, we are told, conduct their funerals without expense, have no kind of entertainment at baptisms, and even celebrate their marriages without company or dancing. "Almost the only pleasure they indulge in is meeting occasionally to the number of fifteen or twenty-five for the purpose of conversing about some of the abstrusest doctrines of Calvinism, in which they display their eloquence in the only kind of spouting of which they have any notion, that of a theologi-

[1] Drainie, iv. 86.

cal oration and a prayer, varied by occasional reflections on the degeneracy and oppressions of the age."[1]

It must be remembered that the period with which we are dealing was one in which the Puritan or Evangelical party was in the ascendant, and sought to emphasise its opposition to the laxer habits of the Moderates by an exaggerated asceticism. Seriousness of demeanour was esteemed the natural accompaniment of religious earnestness. Play was for children, not for grown men:—"As to holidays for recreation or merry-making, the people have only one in the year, called Handsel-Monday; and even the manner in which this is employed shows the sober-mindedness of the people. Instead of meeting in large assemblies for diversions, each family collects its own kindred from the different parts of the district, provides a feast, and spends the time in eating, drinking, and conversation." Such family parties cannot have been very exciting. The narrator, with considerable breadth, laments the absence of amusement, and seeks to account for it. "The people," he says, "have scarcely any sports after they are grown up. Among the infinite advantages of the Reformation this seems to

[1] St. Andrew's Lhanbryd, ix. 177.

have been one disadvantage attending it, that, owing to the gloomy rigour of some of the leading actors, mirth, sport, and cheerfulness were decried among a people already by nature rather phlegmatic. Since that, mirth and vice have in their apprehension been confounded together. Some of the sectaries punish attendance on penny weddings and public dancing with a reproof from the pulpit in presence of the congregation ; so that the people must either dance by themselves or let it alone. This censure in several congregations is falling into disuse." [1]

Perhaps there was no single individual who did more for the cause of tolerance, and the liberation of rational enjoyment from the ban of a narrow Puritanism than Dr. Carlyle, minister of Inveresk. In his interesting account of his parish he speaks of the change that has taken place within the previous forty years. "In the beginning of that period penny bridals, promiscuous dancing and cards were shunned by the grave. Clergymen were sometimes libelled for dancing and playing at cards even in private houses, as well as for shaving, or dressing their hair, or dining in a neighbour's house on the Lord's Day. Happily these fictitious vices,

[1] Auchterderran, i. 458.

an easy abstinence from which gave credit to the whole train of artificial virtues in a false and hypocritical character, are now no more ; and clergymen and their families are on the same footing in respect of all innocent amusements with persons of the same rank in any other profession, as far as is consistent with the dignity and gravity of the clerical character." [1] Probably it were more correct to say that Dr. Carlyle claimed this liberty for himself than that it was freely granted to all. He tells the story of the storm that was raised in ecclesiastical circles when a minister of the Church, Mr. Home, wrote and put on the stage the once famous, but now forgotten, tragedy of *Douglas*, omitting to mention, however, that he himself was his most powerful supporter. "Many persons now alive must remember with what a fit of zeal and hypocrisy (for they were mingled) the minds of great numbers were seized when the tragedy of *Douglas* was first acted in Edinburgh in Dec., 1756. That play is now of the most established reputation, and is justly and universally admired as one of the most excellent compositions in the English language. On occasion of its first appearance on the stage, some seven or eight clergymen who were particular

[1] Inveresk, xvi. 34.

friends of the author, in order to give him countenance, once or twice attended the representation of it, a practice at that time not prevalent, though not altogether unusual. Such a storm was instantly raised against these clergymen that one would have thought that religion and morals had then received a mortal blow, although plays had been frequented for a long period in Edinburgh by many people of the most unexceptionable character without animadversion of any kind, and though several of the most eminent clergymen were well known to have attended the theatre when occasionally in London." He tells how the Presbyteries of the Church took up the case, and how, finally, the General Assembly passed an Act ordaining that no minister should upon any occasion attend the theatre. But in the end the "course of public sentiment and manners, becoming gradually more liberal, proved too strong for such narrow and bigoted principles. In a few years several of the most respectable ministers attended the theatre, not only without any censure from the Church, but without any sort of offence being given or taken."

But, of course, for the great body of the people in the country, such amusements as theatre-going, if they had desired them, were entirely out of reach. All that they could hope for were occa-

sional opportunities of merry-making among themselves. The festival of Hallowe'en, for example, was observed in some places. Beltan, too, was celebrated in various fashions ; Christmas and the New Year were occasions for social gatherings, and sometimes the close of harvest was marked by social rejoicing.

"On the evening of 31st October, O.S., among many others, one remarkable enough ceremony is observed. Heath, broom, and dressings of flax are tied upon a pole. This faggot is then kindled ; one takes it upon his shoulders, and running, bears it round the village ; a crowd attend. When the first faggot is burnt out a second is bound to the pole and kindled in the same manner as before. Numbers of these blazing faggots are often carried about together, and, when the night happens to be dark, they form a splendid illumination. This is Hallowe'en, and a night of great festivity."[1]

There are no descriptions of Hallowe'en such as Burns has given us ; but here is a different version of the nut-burning with which we are familiar :— "On All-Saints Even they set up bonfires in every village. When the bonfire is consumed the ashes are carefully collected in the form of a circle.

[1] Logierait, v. 85.

There is a stone put in near the circumference for every person of the several families interested in the bonfire; and whatever stone is moved out of its place or injured before next morning the person represented by that stone is devoted or *fey*, and is supposed not to live twelve months from that day. The people received the consecrated fire from the Druid priests next morning, the virtues of which were supposed to continue for a year."[1] Again we read :—"Christmas is held as a great festival in this neighbourhood. On that day the servant is free from his master, and goes about visiting his friends and acquaintances. The poorest must have beef or mutton on the table, and what they call a dinner with their friends. Many amuse themselves with various diversions, particularly with shooting for prizes, called here wad-shooting.[2] And many do but little business all the Christmas week, the evening of almost every day being spent in amusement."[3] "Shooting matches and rural balls are frequent at the holy season. Football is a common amusement with the schoolboys, who also preserve the custom of cock-fighting on Shrove Tuesday."[4] The cock-fight dues were the perquisite of the

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[1] Callander, xi. 621.
[2] The wad is the prize or pledge.
[3] Kirkden, ii. 509.
[4] Kirkmichael, xv. 521.

schoolmaster, and formed no inconsiderable share of his meagre income. Thus in Applecross we learn that "the schoolmaster's salary is 200 merks Scots, with the quarter's payment of one and sixpence for English scholars, and two and sixpence for Latin and arithmetic, his only other perquisite being the cock-fight dues, which are equal to one quarter's payment for each scholar."[1] Schoolboys can always be trusted to find games for themselves, and are always most conservative of such as are handed down to them from former times. In Lanark there is "a gala kept by the boys of the Grammar School, beyond all memory, on Saturday before Palm Sunday. They then parade the streets with a palm, or its substitute, a large tree of the willow kind, salix caprea, in blossom, ornamented with daffodils, mezereon, and box-tree. This day is called Palm Saturday, and the custom is certainly a Popish relic of very ancient standing."[2] We have seen that Shrove Tuesday was honoured by being devoted to cock-fighting; but in the parish of Scone, where of old the kings of Scotland were crowned, it had long been the custom to celebrate it in another way. "Every year on Shrove Tuesday, bachelors and married men drew themselves

[1] Applecross, iii. 378. [2] Lanark, xv. 45.

up on opposite sides at the Cross of Scone. A ball was then thrown up, and they played from two o'clock till sunset. The game was this. He who at any time got the ball into his hands ran with it till overtaken by one of the opposite party, and then, if he could shake himself loose from those on the opposite side who seized him, he ran on; if not, he threw the ball from him unless it was wrested from him by the other party; but no person was allowed to kick it. The object of the married men was to *hang* it, *i.e.*, to put it three times into a small hole in the moor, the *dool* or limit on the one hand; that of the bachelors was to drown it, *i.e.*, to dip it three times into a deep place in the river, the limit on the other. The party who could effect either of these objects won the game. But if neither party won, the ball was cut into two equal parts at sunset. In the course of the play one might always see some scene of violence between the parties; but, as the proverb of this part of the country expresses it, *all was fair at the ball of Scone.* Whilst the custom continued, every man in the parish, the gentry not excepted, was obliged to turn out and support the side to which he belonged, and the person who neglected to do his part on that occasion was fined, but the custom, being attended with certain inconveniences, was

abolished a few years ago."[1] "Archery is still practised in some places, notably at Kilwinning, where the monks, in the olden days, had encouraged it." "There are two kinds of archery in use here. The one is a perpendicular mark called a popingoe. It is a bird cut out in wood fixed on the end of a pole, and placed one hundred and twenty feet high on the steeple of the monastery. The archer who shoots down this mark is honoured with the title of captain of the popingoe. He is master of the ceremonies of the succeeding year, gives the ladies a ball and supper, and transmits his honours to posterity by a medal appended to a silver arrow. The prize from 1488 to 1688 was a sash, or as it was called, a *benn.* It was a piece of taffeta or persian of different colours, chiefly red, green, white and blue, and not less in value than £20 Scots. . . . The other kind of shooting is for prizes at butts, point-blank distance (about twenty-six yards)."[2]

The old Scottish game of curling is mentioned, but it is remarkable that it is so little noticed. In a parish in Lanarkshire, so famous for the excellence of its curling stones, it is disappointing to find the sport so briefly and even slight-

[1] Scone, xviii. 88. [2] Kilwinning, xi. 173.

ingly referred to :—"Curling is a favourite diversion among the commonalty, and even the gentlemen sometimes join in it."[1] In one instance, however, in Ayrshire, it receives more honourable mention, though even then with not more than kindly tolerance. "Their chief amusement in winter is curling, or playing stones on smooth ice. They eagerly vie with one another who shall come nearest the mark, and one part of the parish against another, one description of men against another, one trade or occupation against another, and often one whole parish against another—earnestly contend for the palm, which is generally all the prize, except that perhaps the victors claim from the vanquished the dinner and bowl of toddy, which, to do them justice, both commonly take together with great cordiality, and generally without any grudge at the fortune of the day ; wisely reflecting, no doubt, that defeat as well as victory is the fate of war. Those accustomed to this amusement, or that have acquired dexterity in the game, are extremely fond of it. The amusement itself is healthful ; it is innocent ; it does nobody harm ; let them enjoy it."[2]

The other national game of golf hardly obtains

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[1] Crawford-John, vi. 277. [2] Muirkirk, vii. 612.

more hearty recognition. In the account of St. Andrews all that is said is that there is a large tract of "downs or bents, which produces some pasture for sheep, and forms the links well known to golfers." But less known links are mentioned and commended. "To those who are fond of the healthful and manly diversion of the golf there is adjoining, one of the finest pieces of links of its size in Scotland. A great part of it is like velvet, with all the variety of hazards necessary to employ the different clubs used by the nicest players."[1] The genial minister of Inveresk could not, of course, overlook the famous links of Musselburgh. "The golf, so long a favourite and peculiar exercise of the Scots, is much in use here. Children are trained to it from their early days. The amusements of the fishwives are of the masculine kind. On holidays they frequently play at the golf, and on Shrove Tuesday there is a standing match at foot-ball between the married and unmarried women, in which the former are always victors."[2] He even ventures to trace the origin of the game to a Dutch game called kolf, a description of which he gives. He says the term golf is derived from kolf, and both probably from the Greek κολοφος.

[1] Burntisland, ii. 424. [2] Inveresk, xvi. 19.

Again, at Montrose, "playing at the golf is a favourite and wholesome amusement; and there is excellent ground for the purpose." But these are a gay people, and have many amusements. Besides golf, "playing at bowls and billiards is also frequently practised. Cards sometimes engross too much time. In the proper season some retire to the hills for shooting, and their friends at home judge of their success by the presents they receive. During the winter season there is an Assembly every three weeks, which is conducted with the greatest decorum. At Christmas and the New Year the opulent burghers begin to feast with their friends, and go a round of visits which take up a space of many weeks."[1] Feasting is in some quarters manifestly on the increase. In a comparative statement of the condition of his parish in 1760 and 1790 a minister notes this point: "In 1760 the people in this parish never visited each other but at Christmas. The entertainment was broth and beef; the visitors sent to an ale-house for five or six pints of ale and were merry over it without any ceremony. In 1790 people visit each other often; a few neighbours are invited to one house to dinner; six or seven dishes are set on the

[1] Montrose, v. 48.

table elegantly dressed ; after dinner a large bowl of rum punch is drunk ; then tea ; again another bowl ; after that supper, and what they call the grace drink."[1] Sometimes there were impromptu social gatherings, at which, with very little expense, the country people enjoyed themselves in their own fashion. They at least promoted friendly intercourse. "There is a custom here of great antiquity, commonly known by the name of *rocking*, that is when neighbours visit one another in pairs, or three or more in company during the moonlight of winter or spring, and spend the evening alternately in one another's houses. The custom seems to have arisen when spinning on the rock or distaff was in use, which, therefore, was carried along with the visitant to a neighbour's house. Now when one neighbour says to another, 'I am coming over with my rock,' he means no more than that he intends soon to spend an evening with him."[2] The harvest feasts were not much observed, perhaps because the scanty crops did not much conduce to lightness of heart in the farmer. But they were not altogether unknown. "It was till very lately the custom to give what was called a Maiden Feast on the finishing of the harvest. The last handful of

[1] Mains, v. 227. [2] Muirkirk, vii. 612.

corn reaped in the field was called the maiden. This was generally contrived to fall into the hands of one of the finest girls in the field. It was dressed up in ribbands and brought home in triumph with the music of fiddles or bagpipes. A good dinner was given to the whole band, and the evening spent in jovialty and dancing, while the fortunate lass who took the maiden was the queen of the feast; after which this handful of corn was dressed out generally in the form of a cross, and hung up in some conspicuous part of the house."[1] In a parish in the north there was a function called a *daubing*, that combined useful neighbourly service with enjoyment. "The farm houses in general and all the cottages are built of mud or clay. The manner of erecting them is singular. In the first place, they dig out the foundation and lay a row or two of stones; and then, having provided a quantity of clay or brick-earth, and sufficient straw to mix with it, on the day appointed the whole neighbourhood, male and female, assemble each with a dung-fork, a spade, or some such instrument. Some fall to the working of the mud by mixing it with straw, others carry the material, and some of the most experienced build the walls. In this

[1] Longforgan, xix. 550.

manner the walls are finished in a few hours, after which they retire to a good dinner and plenty of drink which is provided for them, and conclude the evening with music and dancing and other marks of festivity. This is called a *daubing*, and thus they make a frolic of what would otherwise be a very dirty and disagreeable job."[1]

There is in one parish in Dumfriesshire a curious forerunner of the modern charity ball, called a Drinking. "When a poor family is reduced to specially needy circumstances, instead of sending round a subscription list to their friends and neighbours, they issue an invitation to a Drinking. The drinking consists of a little small beer with a bit of bread and cheese, and sometimes a small glass of brandy or whisky. The guests convene at the time appointed, and, after collecting a shilling a-piece, and sometimes more, they divert themselves for about a couple of hours with music and dancing, and then go home. Such as cannot attend usually send their contribution by a neighbour. These meetings sometimes produce £5, £6, or £7 to the needy family."[2]

Some of the amusements that were most widely spread are simple enough in their existing forms,

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[1] Dornoch, ii. 22. [2] Kirkmichael, i. 59.

but are interesting as the last surviving relics of the heathen faith of far-off ancestors. Such are the observances of Beltane. In some cases only the bonfire survives. "An ancient practice still continues in this parish of kindling a large fire, or *tawnle*, as it is usually termed, of wood on some eminence, and making merry round it upon the eve of the Wednesday of Marymass Fair in Irvine."[1] The word "tawnle" means simply a fire, and has no suggestion of sacrifice, and all connection with the Sun God is effectually removed by associating it with the festival of St. Mary. But in other cases the word is retained, though it is sometimes held on a Saint's day. "On the 1st of May, O.S., a festival called Beltan is annually held here. It is chiefly celebrated by the cow-herds, who assemble by scores in the fields to dress a dinner for themselves of boiled milk and eggs. These dishes they eat with a sort of cake baked for the occasion, and having small lumps in the form of nipples raised all over the surface. The cake might perhaps be an offering to some deity in the days of Druidism."[2] The usual mode, however, of keeping Beltan is by kindling great fires on the surrounding heights. "The custom

[1] Dundonald, vii. 623. [2] Logierait, v. 84.

still remains among the herds and young people to kindle fires in the high grounds in honour of Beltan. In Gaelic the name signifies Baal or Bel's fire, and Beltan was anciently the time of the solemnity. It is now kept on St. Peter's day."[1] A Highland minister, describing the ceremony at greater length, remarks that it is fast wearing out. "Upon the first of May, which is called Beltan or Bal-tein day, all the boys in a township or hamlet meet in the moors. They cut a table in the green sod of a round figure by casting a trench in the ground of such a circumference as to hold the whole company. They kindle a fire and dress a repast of eggs and milk in the consistence of a custard. They knead a cake of oatmeal, which is toasted at the embers against a stone. After the custard is eaten up they divide the cake into so many portions, as similar as possible to one another in size and shape, as there are persons in the company. They daub one of these portions all over with charcoal until it is perfectly black. They put all the bits of the cake into a bonnet. Every one, blindfold, draws out a portion. He who holds the bonnet is entitled to the last bit. Whoever draws the black bit is the *devoted* person who is to

[1] Loudon, iii. 105.

be sacrificed to Baal. The sacrifice now consists in compelling the devoted person to leap three times through the flames, with which the ceremonies of this festival are closed."[1]

[1] Callander, xi. 621.

Marriages—Births—Funerals.

MARRIAGES—BIRTHS—FUNERALS.

These almost the only occasions of feasting—large families—superstitions about marriage and proclamation of banns—lucky and unlucky days and months—regard for state of moon and tide—happy and unhappy feet—fore-speaking—untying of knots—penny bridals—courting in public houses—creeling—handfasting—curious marriage contract—Gretna marriages—irregular marriages—births and baptisms—custom at private baptism—objection to private baptism—frets, and their significance—funerals—important occasions—great deal of eating and drinking—invitation to funerals—proposal to tax funerals—procession to grave—full description of ceremony in Campsie—lyke-wakes—dredgy—last buried keeps the churchyard gate—popular wish for a decent funeral—bells at funerals—desire to be buried in native place.

THE manner in which these three great domestic events were regarded by the people, affords no unimportant indication of the character of their lives. They were almost the only breaks in the routine of a monotonous existence, well-nigh the sole occasions that called forth such sentiment and imagination as were in them. They were popular feasts, the rare holidays that enabled them to realize, by the unusual excitement of feeling, whether of joy or of sorrow, that they were living. The poor people of a century ago in Scotland had

few holidays. "It is seldom that there are social meetings; marriages, baptisms, funerals, and the conclusion of the harvest are almost the only occasions of feasting."[1] This remark may be applied to the whole country. From the most tender years of childhood to tottering old age there was an unceasing round of toil. But dismally dull as their lot must seem it had doubtless its compensations, as witness the story of a man "who died above 90, and who, about eight months before his death, got a complete set of new teeth, which he employed to excellent purpose till near his last breath." This patriarch had, however, more than the usual share of the holidays just referred to. "He was four times married, had children by all his wives, and, at the baptism of his last child, which happened not a year before his death, with an air of complacency expressed his thankfulness to his Maker for having at last sent him the *cled score*, i.e., 21."[2] Not often has a nonagenarian held up an infant of his own at the baptismal font. If, according to the Psalmist, children are as arrows, and "happy is the man who has his quiver full of them," surely that other hero was abnormally blessed, "who had

[1] Gargunnock, xviii. 123. [2] Parton, i. 187.

24 children all baptized in the kirk of Moneydie."[1] The statement does not even preclude the possibility that he had others baptized elsewhere. Nor are these cases so exceptional as we might suppose. In Kirkwall, we are told, large families are the rule, "especially among what are called the better sort of people. They have often ten, twelve, and even fifteen children. There is a clergyman in this Synod still alive to whom one wife bore twenty-two; and the present provost's father had, by only two wives, thirty-six children."[2]

There are many curious customs and superstitious practices associated with marriage, some of which still survive. Thus universally in Scotland May was, as in large measure it still is, considered an unlucky month. In some parts the month of January also was declared unsuitable for marriage, while in others a distinct preference was given to April and November. The 14th day of May was deemed so specially inauspicious that even the day of the week on which it fell in any year was tabooed by bridal couples for the remainder of the year. Many refused to be married on a Friday, while with others it was the favourite day. But this was not all. Not a few maidens declined to

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[1] Moneydie, iii. 606. [2] Kirkwall, vii. 550.

enter on matrimony except when the moon was waxing, and some even required further that at the time of the ceremony the tide should be flowing. When at length the marriage day was fixed, and in cases where all these circumstances had to be taken into account much careful consideration must have been needed, the date must not be altered or postponed, or some serious result might happen. So, too, the time of the proclamation of the banns was subject of anxious calculation. At the church itself there are ceremonies not less important than that performed by the officiating clergymen ; the metaphorical "tying of the knot," for instance, must be preceded by a literal untying of knots. Of these and other observances we shall now proceed to give some examples. Thus in one parish, "though the superstition of former times is now much worn out, a little still remains. There are happy and unhappy days for beginning any undertaking. Thus, few would choose to be married on Friday, though it is the ordinary day in other quarters of the church. There are also happy and unhappy feet. Thus, they wish bridegrooms and brides a happy foot ; and to prevent any bad effect they salute those they meet on the road with a kiss. It is hard, however, if any misfortune happens when you are passing that you should be

blamed when neither you nor your feet ever thought of the matter. The tongue, too, must be guarded even when it commends; it had more need, one would think, when it discommends. Thus, to prevent what is called fore-speaking, they say of a person, God save them, and of a beast, Luck fair it."[1]

At Logierait, in Perthshire, a rather interesting account of marriage proceedings is given: "Lucky and unlucky days are by many anxiously observed. The day of the week upon which the 14th of May happens to fall is esteemed unlucky through all the remainder of the year; none marry or begin any serious business upon it. None choose to marry in January or May, or to have their banns proclaimed in the end of one quarter of the year, and to marry at the beginning of the next. Immediately before the celebration of the marriage ceremony every knot about the bride and bridegroom—garters, shoe-strings, strings of petticoats, etc.—is carefully loosened. After leaving the church the whole company walk round it, keeping the church walls always upon the right hand. The bridegroom, however, first retires one way with some young men to tie the knots that were loosed

[1] Forglen, xiv. 541.

about him ; while the young married woman in the same manner retires somewhere else to adjust the disorder of her dress."[1] In the Northern Isles one is not surprised to hear that superstitious beliefs still hold sway, that "no couple chooses to marry except with a growing moon, and some even wish for a flowing tide,"[2] or again, in another parish, that "they do not marry but in the waxing of the moon," and, moreover, would "consider it as an unhappy omen were they, by any means, disappointed in getting themselves married, or their children baptised, on the very day which they had previously fixed in their mind for that purpose."[3]

After the wedding ceremony was over the guests gave themselves over to feasting and enjoyment. The common practice of Penny Bridals imposed on the company the expense of the entertainment. The immediate relatives were perhaps regaled with a single "dram and a drink," but thereafter each had to provide for himself. There were often large numbers at these gatherings, and the festivities might be prolonged for two or three days, or were closed only by the

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[1] Logierait, v. 83. [2] Ronaldshay, xv. 311.
[3] Kirkwall, vii. 560.

approach of Sabbath. When the guests were not so numerous, the feast, to which all who were invited were expected to contribute, might take place in the bridegroom's house, but generally it was held in a tavern, and the invitations were general. One can easily understand that there was a great deal of drinking at such celebrations, and that disorder, and drunkenness, and quarelling were the inevitable concomitants. No wonder that those responsible for the morals of the people sought to restrain or abolish the Penny Bridal.

One minister thinks it necessary to define the term. "A penny wedding, which is almost the only diversion the young people have, is when the expense of the marriage entertainment is not defrayed by the young couple or their relations, but by a club amongst the guests. Two hundred people of both sexes will sometimes be convened on an occasion of this kind."[1] Another seems rather to commend the institution. "They are a social people, and one evidence of their being so is, that there may be sometimes sixty, seventy, and sometimes a hundred, at a wedding, to the expense of which the guests contribute by sending some milk, butter, cheese, poultry, etc., while

[1] Drainie, iv. 86.

others send stone plates and stone jugs."[1] Still another minister seems disposed to condemn them because they no longer serve the purpose for which they were originally intended of contributing to start the young couple in life. He says: "Marriages in this place are generally conducted in the style of penny weddings. Little other fare is provided except bread, ale, and whisky. The relatives, who assemble in the morning, are entertained with a dram and a drink gratis. But, after the ceremony is performed, every man pays for his drink. The neighbours then convene in great numbers. A fiddler or two, with perhaps a boy to scrape on an old violoncello, are engaged. A barn is allotted for the dancing, and the house for drinking. And thus they make merry for two or three days till Saturday night. On Sabbath, after returning from church, the married couple give a sort of dinner or entertainment to the present friends on both sides. So that these weddings on the whole bring little gain or loss to the parties."[2] But in one parish in the north, the penny bridal is treated with condemnation and contempt. "It is a scene which involved every amusement and every joy of an idle and illiterate age, but is now

[1] Methlick, iv. 322. [2] Avoch, xv. 636.

reprobated as an index of want of money and of want of taste. When a pair were contracted they, for a stipulated consideration, bespoke the wedding dinner at a certain tavern, and then ranged the country in every direction to solicit guests. One, two, and even three hundred would convene on these occasions to make merry at their own expense for two or more days. This scene of feasting, drinking, dancing, wooing, fighting, was always enjoyed with the highest relish, and, until obliterated by a similar scene, furnished ample materials for rural mirth and rural scandal."[1] Of course, those who were in better social circumstances entertained their guests in more hospitable fashion, though to contribute to the feast was then the common form of marriage present. In Gargunnock, where, we are told, marriages usually take place in April and November and never in May, "a principal tenant's son or daughter has a crowd of attendants at marriage, and the entertainment lasts for two days at the expense of the parties, but the company at large pay for the music."[2]

There was a great deal of drinking in these days, and the alehouse was the centre of much of country life. It is curious, however, to hear of the

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[1] Monquhitter xxi. 146. [2] Gargunnock, xviii. 123.

inn as the rendezvous for courting, and the hostess as the confidant. Yet so it was in one Ayrshire parish. "When a young man wishes to pay his addresses to his sweetheart, instead of going to her father's and professing his passion, he goes to a public house; and, having let the landlady into the secret of his attachment, the object of his wishes is immediately sent for, who never almost refuses to come. She is entertained with ale and whisky, or brandy, and the marriage is concluded on."[1] In the same parish there is a ceremony on the second day after marriage, called *creeling*, which Jamieson describes as a "foolish and indelicate custom." The indelicacy, however, does not appear in this account. "The young wedded pair, with their friends, assemble in a convenient spot. A small creel or basket is prepared for the occasion, into which they put some stones. The young men carry it alternately, and allow themselves to be caught by the maidens, who have a kiss when they succeed. After a great deal of innocent mirth and pleasantry, the creel falls at length to the young husband's share, who is obliged to carry it generally for a long time, none of the young women having compassion upon him. At last his

[1] Galston, ii. 80.

fair mate kindly relieves him from his burden ; and her complaisance in this particular is considered as a proof of her satisfaction with the choice she has made. The creel goes round again ; more merriment succeeds, and all the company dine together, and talk over the feats of the field." The narrator adds a note which, at any rate, enables him to air his learning : "perhaps the French phrase, *Adieu panniers vendauges sont faites*, may allude to a similar custom."

A minister in Dumfriesshire describes a looser tie than marriage, which, however, he declares to have fallen into disuse. A fair was held annually at the meeting of the Black and White Esks. "At that place it was the custom of the unmarried persons of both sexes to choose a companion according to their liking with whom they were to live till that time next year. This was called *handfasting*, or hand in fist. If they were pleased with each other at that time then they continued together for life ; if not they separated, and were free to make another choice. The fruit of this connection, if any, was always attached to the disaffected person."[1]

There is a naïve laudation of marriage by a

[1] Eskdalemuir, xii. 615.

minister who pathetically laments that the smallness of his stipend and not inclination compels him to celibacy. "Bachelorism," he says, "is surely a pitiable and comfortless condition, and they that are in would fain be out, but unless the Court of Teinds shall vouchsafe to deliver us from it without the aid of a Pope's bull, it must soon become more frequent." [1]

As the Statistical Account is concerned chiefly with the condition of the common people there is not much mention made of marriage contracts. The minister of a border parish, however, incidentally refers to one that is very suggestive of the unsettled state of the country when moonlight raids were common, and cattle lifting was the recognised mode of adding to a farmer's stock. The daughter of Mary Scott, the Flower of Yarrow, was married to an Elliot of Stobbs. In the marriage contract it was provided that "the father should keep his daughter for some time after the wedding, on condition that his son-in-law bound himself to pay over to him the proceeds of the first Michaelmas moon." [2]

In various quarters strong condemnation is expressed of irregular marriages. These seemed to

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[1] Rescobie, xiv. 601. [2] Selkirk, ii. 437.

to have prevailed to a large extent in Aberdeen, where they were known as Justice of Peace marriages. The procedure was certainly curious. "When a young couple meet with any obstacle to their union, they apply to the procurator-fiscal to get a Justice of Peace to marry them. He instructs them to tell the Justice that they were married at such a time, but to refuse to name the celebrator and witnesses. Whereupon the Justice first decerns them to pay the legal fine; and next, upon a representation of their poverty, he modifies this fine sometimes to half a guinea, sometimes to 5s., or even much less. They get an extract of their sentence, pay the procurator-fiscal, and the ceremony is over. Can any idea be more ridiculous than that a person should apply to a public prosecutor, pay him, and be instructed to tell a lie to the magistrate, merely to get himself punished for a crime, which he is conscious he never committed!"[1]

The minister of Gretna, or Graitney, as he spells the name, has naturally something to say of the irregular marriages for which that village was once so notorious. "This parish has been long famous in the annals of matrimonial adventure, for the marriages of fugitive lovers from England, which

[1] Aberdeen, xix. 173.

have been celebrated here. People living at a distance erroneously suppose that the regular and established clergyman of this parish is the celebrator of these marriages; whereas the persons who follow this illicit practice are mere impostors, priests of their own erection, who have no right whatever either to marry or to exercise any part of the clerical function. There are at present more than one of this description in this place. But the greater part of the trade is monopolized by a man who was originally a tobacconist, and not a blacksmith, as is generally believed. He is a fellow without literature, without principles, without morals, and without manners. His life is a continued scene of drunkenness. His irregular conduct has made him an object of detestation to all the sober and virtuous part of the neighbourhood. Such is the man (and the description is not exaggerated) who has had the honour to join in the sacred bonds of wedlock many people of great rank and fortune from all parts of England. It is forty years and upwards since marriages of this kind began to be celebrated here. At the lowest computation about sixty are supposed to be solemnized annually in this place. Taken at an average through the year they may be estimated at fifteen guineas each; consequently this traffic

brings in about £945 a year. The form of ceremony, when any ceremony is used, is that of the Church of England. On some occasions, particularly when the parson is intoxicated, which is often the case, a certificate only is given. The certificate is signed by the parson himself, and two witnesses under fictitious signatures. The following is a copy of one of these certificates in the original spelling :—'This is to sartfay all persons that may be consernid that A. B., from the parish of C. and in County of D., and E. F., from the parish of G. and in the County of K., and both comes before me and declayred themselefs both to be single persons, and now mayried by the forme of the Kirk of Scotland, and agreible to the Church of England, and givene ondre my hand this 18th day of March, 1793.'

"Is it not a disgrace to the police of a civilized country to permit such irregularities to be practised with impunity? And is it not a reflection on the good sense of the Nobility and Gentry of England (for some of the English Nobility have been married here) to suffer themselves to be imposed upon, and their pockets to be picked, by such miscreants?"[1]

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[1] Gretna, ix. 532.

About birth or baptism comparatively little is recorded. Apparently it was not so much associated as marriage with feasting and merry-making. Still it was usual to offer some entertainment to friends calling to present their congratulations. In one parish it is noted as one sign, among others, of the growth of luxury and improvement in the manner of living, that, whereas in 1700 "Orkney cheese, oat-cakes, and ale brewed without hops, were generally presented at christenings," visitors on such occasions are now, in 1794, regaled with "English cheese, white bread, cinnamon waters, and wine."[1] In the same parish where we found some peculiar marriage ceremonies, there is also a curious custom connected with baptism. "When a child was baptized privately it was not long since customary to put the child upon a clean basket having a cloth spread previously over it, with bread and cheese put into the cloth; and thus to move the basket three times successively round the iron crook which hangs over the fire from the roof of the house for the purpose of supporting the pots when water is boiled or victuals are prepared. This might be anciently intended to counteract the malignant

[1] Sandwick, xvi. 467.

arts which witches and evil spirits were imagined to practise against new-born infants."[1] The explanation is doubtless correct. It is clearly a relic of the cruel practice of half-roasting a suspected changeling in order that the fairies might be induced to take away the false and restore the true child. In some parishes, however, there is a strong objection to private baptism, and children are carried to church at the earliest opportunity. "There is one pernicious practice that prevails much in this parish, which is that of carrying their children out to baptism the first or second day after birth. Many of them, although they had it in their option to have their children baptized in their own houses by waiting one day, prefer carrying them seven or eight miles to church in the worst weather in December or January, by which folly they too often sacrifice the lives of their infants to the phantom of superstition."[2] This is a superstition of which no shred has survived in modern times. One minister moralises over some of the *frets* connected with childbirth, and finds in them a high significance. Thus "it was most unhappy for a woman after bringing forth a child to offer a visit, and for her neigh-

[1] Logierait, v. 83. [2] Kilfinan, xiv. 261.

bours to receive it, till she had been duly churched. How strongly does this enforce gratitude to the Supreme Being for a safe delivery! Again, on the day when such a woman is churched every family favoured with a call are bound to set meat and drink before her; and when they omit to do so, they and theirs are to be loaded with her hunger. What is this but an obligation on all who have it in their power to do the needful to prevent a feeble woman from fainting for want?"[1] Apparently the maxim, "place aux dames" does not apply to baptism. A girl preceding a boy at the font may be severely punished for her presumption. "Within these last seven years the minister has been twice interrupted in administering baptism to a female child before the male child. When the service was over he was gravely told that he had done very wrong, for as the female child was first baptized she would on her coming to years of discretion most certainly have a strong beard, and the boy would have none."[2]

In regard to funerals we obtain a great deal of interesting information from the Statistical Accounts. There are frequent references to burial customs in different parts of the country.

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[1] Monquhitter, xxi. 147.

[2] Ronaldshay, xv. 311.

From these it appears that a funeral, especially in the rural districts, was regarded as a great occasion, in which the whole parish was interested. The presence of death conferred on even the poorest household a certain distinction, which was recognized by all the friends and neighbours. From the moment when the death occurred till the interment was over the bereaved family were the object of much attention. To pay friendly visits of condolence, to take turns in watching the corpse, and, above all, to be present at the burial were neighbourly offices which were never neglected. All this led to a great deal of eating and drinking, which not only impoverished the survivors, but also resulted in riotous excess and unseemly behaviour. The efforts made by the clergy and others to keep the proceedings within bounds were apparently not very successful. "The people too much adhere to the folly of their ancestors. At their burials and marriages they have a custom of feasting a great number of their friends and neighbours, and this often at an expense, which proves greatly to the prejudice of poor orphans and young people."[1] But it is probable that the bereaved relatives did not grudge the

[1] Lochbroom, x. 467.

expense. They would feel more than repaid by the satisfaction they experienced in having done their duty by the dead, and by the position of temporary importance they enjoyed among their neighbours. It was usual to invite the whole parish to the funeral. "The mode of invitation to the entertainment was by some special messenger, which was styled bidding to the burial, the form being nearly in the following words: 'You are desired to come to such a one's burial to-morrow, against ten hours.' No person was invited by letter; and though invited against ten of the clock, the corpse was never interred till the evening; time not being so much valued in these days."[1] Sometimes the invitation is in another form. "At the burials of the poor people, a custom almost obsolete in other parts of Scotland is continued here. The beadle perambulates the streets with a bell, and intimates the death of the individual in the following language: 'All brethren and sisters, I let ye to wit, there is a brother departed at the pleasure of the Almighty (here he lifts his hat) called ——. All those that come to the burial, come at —— o'clock. The corpse is at ——.' He also walks before the corpse to the

[1] Campsie, xv. 372.

churchyard, ringing his bell." [1] Another minister testifies:—"Country burials are not well regulated. The company are invited at eleven o'clock forenoon, but they are probably not all arrived at two. Till of late a pipe and tobacco were provided for every one of the company ; but this custom is entirely laid aside." [2]

One minister suggests a drastic method of limiting the number at funerals. "It is no unusual thing, when a wealthy person dies, to invite two or three parishes to attend his funeral ; and as they are limited to no particular hour, great part of the day is taken up in coming to it, and waiting on it. But the loss of labour and the loss of time are not the only evils that follow it ; it becomes oppressive to those who cannot afford the expense, but who from vanity or pride must continue the custom. Many things have been objects of taxation, and were this as universal as it is unnecessary, it would be wise and merciful in the Legislature not to exempt it." [3] The complaint is very general. "It is usual in this parish, as in many other parts of Scotland, when a death has taken place, to invite on such occasions the greater

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[1] Borrowstownness, xviii. 439. [2] Dundonald, vii. 623.
[3] Dunlop, ix. 543.

part of the country around; and though called to attend at an early hour of the forenoon, yet it is generally towards evening before they think of carrying forth the corpse to the churchyard for interment. While on these occasions the good folks are assembled, though they never run into excess, yet no small expense is incurred by the family, who often vie with those around them in giving, as they call it, an honourable burial to their deceased friend."[1] Again, in another parish we hear to the same effect that "the manner of conducting funerals needs much amendment. From the death to the interment, the house is thronged by night and day, and the conversation is often very unsuitable to the occasion. The whole parish is invited at ten o'clock in the forenoon of the day of the funeral, but it is soon enough to attend at three o'clock afternoon. Every one is entertained with a variety of meats and drinks. Not a few return to the dirge, and sometimes forget what they have been doing, and where they are."[2]

It is not, however, all fault-finding. In one parish we are told "burials are conducted with great decorum. None even of the common people

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[1] Carmunnock, xviii. 175. [2] Gargunnock, xviii. 123.

attend without a particular invitation. After some entertainment (for at the burial of the poorest here there is a refreshment given, consisting generally of whisquy beath or some foreign liquor, butter and cheese with oat bread) the friends of the deceased, and neighbours of the village who come to witness the interment, are drawn up in rank and file by an old serjeant, or some veteran who has been in the army, and who attends to maintain order and to give, as they term it here, the word of relief. Upon his crying *Relief*, the four under the bier prepare to leave their stations and make room for other four that instantly succeed. This progression is observed at the interval of every five minutes till the whole attendants come in regularly ; and if the distance requires it there is a second, a third, or a fourth round of such evolutions gone through. When the persons present are not inflamed with liquor, which is now seldom the case, there is a profound silence generally observed from the time the corpse has been taken up till the interment is over." [1]

But the most interesting account of the formalities observed at a funeral is given by the minister of Campsie. He tells of the prayers that pre-

[1] Tongue, iii. 525.

ceded and followed the feast, really graces before and after meat, and describes the "services." It is to be noted that what was called the *service* was not any religious observances connected with the burial, but the refreshment for the company. "It was customary till within these few years, when any head of a family died, to invite the whole parish. They were served on boards in the barn, where a prayer was pronounced before and after the service, which duty was most religiously observed. The entertainment consisted of the following parts: *first*, there was a drink of ale, then a dram, then a piece of short-bread, then another dram of some other species of liquor, then a piece of currant-bread, and a third dram either of spirits or wine, which was followed by loaves and cheese, pipes and tobacco. This was the old funeral entertainment in the parish of Campsie, and was stiled their service; and sometimes this was repeated, and was then stiled a double service; and it was sure of being repeated at the dredgy. A funeral cost at least a hundred pounds Scots (£8 6s. 8d. stg.) to any family who followed the old course. The most active young man was pointed out to the office of server; and in these days, while the manners were simple and at the same time serious, it was no small honour to be a

server at a burial. However distant any part of the parish was from the place of interment it was customary for the attendants to carry the corpse on hand spokes. . . . It was customary for them to have at least two lyke-wakes (the corpse being kept two nights before the interment) where the young neighbours watched the corpse, being merry or sorrowful according to the situation or rank of the deceased." [1] The *lyke-wake*, literally the watching of the body, was probably a survival of a Roman Catholic, or even more ancient custom. "The spirit was believed to hover near the body till it was consigned to the ground. There was a *fret* or superstition that it portended misfortune if a cat was permitted to leap over a corpse, and the meaning of this and the purpose of the wake may just have been to protect the inanimate form from being desecrated by attack from carnivorous vermin." [2] The dredgy, derge, or dirge, was, according to Jamieson, "the compotation of the funeral company after the interment." He derives the word from the Latin *dirige*, frequently repeated in the office for the dead. It was held either at the house from which the funeral had proceeded or at a tavern, and often ended in a serious carouse.

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[1] Campsie, xv. 372. [2] Monquhitter, xxi. 147.

It is curious to find an old pagan superstition surviving in two districts so far apart as Mull and Aberdeenshire. In the account of Kilfinichen the minister, while premising that his people "are by no means superstitious," yet states that "they still retain some opinions handed down by their ancestors, perhaps from the times of the Druids. It is believed by them that the spirit of the last person that was buried watches round the churchyard till another is buried, to whom he delivers his charge."[1] The minister of Monquhitter relates: "In one division of the county, where it was believed that the ghost of the person last buried kept the gate of the church yard till relieved by the next victim of death, a singular scene occurred when two burials were to take place in one church yard on the same day. Both parties staggered forward as fast as possible to consign their respective friend in the first place to the dust. If they met at the gate, the dead were thrown down till the living decided by blows which ghost should be condemned to porter it."[2] Where so much strong liquor was consumed we can well believe, on the authority of the same narrator, that very often "funerals were disgraced by riot and drunkenness, and the body

[1] Kilfinichen, xiv. 210. [2] Monquhitter, xxi. 144.

of friend or neighbour was laid in the dust by a staggering, babbling multitude." It is well to be assured that in his days such scenes were no longer common, that "funerals are conducted with due solemnity by people in their senses. Drunkenness has lost, and is losing ground ; and unless by the sot, the tavern is never frequented but when propriety or necessity require it."

The desire of the common people for a decent funeral is frequently noted. In one parish it was found to be a strong deterrent from going on the poor's roll, when that implied the assignation of all the effects to the parish. "The aversion of the poor to a funeral, from which any part of the usual expense has been retrenched has prevented several persons from claiming to be put on the roll. The desire of what is called a decent funeral, *i.e.* one to which all the inhabitants of the district are invited, and at which every part of the usual entertainment is given, is one of the strongest in that rank of people. The expense of it amounts nearly to £2. This sum therefore every person in mean circumstances is anxious to lay up, and he will not spend it, unless reduced to the greatest extremity."[1]

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[1] Kincardine, vi. 487.

The ringing of bells at funerals is common. The hand bell rung before a burial procession would seem to be a less ceremonious form of tolling, though both may have originated in the belief that evil spirits were thus driven away. "At common funerals in this district the corpse is preceded by the parish officer tolling a hand bell. The pall or mortcloth is of plain black velvet without any decoration except a fringe. An immense crowd of both sexes attend; and the lamentations of the women in some cases, on seeing a beloved relative put into the grave, would almost pierce a heart of stone."[1] In Galston also it is noted that women attend funerals "drest in black or red cloaks."[2] In Glasgow where a sum of ten guineas is given as a donation to the poor on the occasion of a funeral the city bells are tolled.[3]

It is frequently remarked that the people have a great desire to be buried among their "ain folk." This is a sentiment easily understood, and still widely prevalent. It would appear, however, that it was more attended to a century ago. "A custom prevails all over the country of carrying the dead for interment to a distant churchyard, if the ancestors of the deceased were buried there. In

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[1] Avoch, xv. 636. [2] Galston, ii. 80 [3] Glasgow, v. 523.

fact, there are more funerals here from other parishes than from the parish itself, and the people here follow the same custom, if they have burying-places elsewhere."[1] In another parish it is remarked : "According to a prejudice of very ancient date the common wish is to be buried with our fathers : and from the change of residence which ever must take place among the great body of the people, and the fluctuating state of all human affairs, there are not above two farmers in these bounds who bury in this place."[2]

We may conclude this chapter by referring to a popular idea found especially among a sea-faring population, that dying persons can pass away only during the ebbing of the tide. One minister states that he had frequently remarked the fact, and cites testimony to the antiquity of the belief. "With this remark accords that observation in Pliny's Natural History (Lib. ii., cap. 98) quoted from Aristotle, who affirms that 'no animal expires unless during the going back of the tide.' To which Pliny adds : observatum id multum in Gallico Oceano et duntaxat in homine compertum."[3]

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[1] Kirkpatrick-Irongray, iv. 531. [2] Borthwick, xiii. 632.
[3] Barry, iv. 531.

Popular Superstitions.

POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS.

Superstitions, how regarded by narrators—a haunted house—belief in fairies—in luck—reverence for Sun—deisheal—charms—belief in "tasks"—brownies—mountain-ash a protection from witches—Sow-Day—no Sinclair wears green—the kelpy at St. Vigean—scene at Communion—ghosts—clergyman conveyed by the fairies—the well of St. Michael predicts through a sacred fly—witchcraft—holy wells at Gigha, Unst, Marykirk, Portpatrick, Kilallan, Kilmuir, Logierait, Comrie—Sunday unpropitious for sick—vows to Saints—holy bells—medical superstitions—king's evil—cure of Glacach—opposition to inoculation—dumb fits in a woman—epilepsy, how cured—the louping ague—cure for asthma—curious cure for rheumatism.

WHEN we consider how much superstitious beliefs continue to affect our conduct at the present day—as, for example, the well-nigh universal unwillingness to be married in May, or the very general hesitation to be one of a party of thirteen at dinner—we shall not be surprised to find that, a century ago, they were more widely spread and exercised a greater influence. We have already had occasion to refer to some of these beliefs, as associated with such important domestic events as marriages and funerals, but there are many others that seem

worthy of notice. It is interesting to observe the varying tones in which the different narrators mention these superstitions. Some treat them with a lofty air of intellectual superiority, as if they were matters too trivial and childish to occupy their serious pens. Others are manifestly of opinion that there are more things in heaven and earth than can be accounted for by any philosophy; while others, unwilling that they should be supposed so lacking in enlightenment as to yield any credence to the vulgar beliefs, protest so strongly as to awaken the suspicion that their scepticism is in part at least assumed. As might be expected, the most notable instances are to be found in Highland parishes, or even further north, in Orkney and Shetland. As an example of the half-apologetic mode of dealing with the popular beliefs, which the narrator does not accept, but neither cares strenuously to deny, we may take the following account from Orcadia :—"The common people of this district remain to this day so credulous as to think that fairies do exist; that an inferior species of witchcraft is still practised, and that houses have been haunted not only in former ages, but that they are haunted, at least noises are heard which cannot be accounted for on rational principles, even in our days." Then follows a

somewhat prolix account of such supernatural noises, which we slightly abridge. A boat builder heard during the night noises like that of nails being driven into a boat he had on the stocks. On going out he saw no one. On successive nights the same noises were heard also by his wife and children. When the boat was finished and sent home to the other side of the island, it was hoped the sounds would cease; "yet, lo and behold, the same noise continued, even with no boat on the stocks, and that for no less than four months; and as the time elapsed the noise increased with still louder and quicker strokes until it came to resemble the strokes of two men hard at work on a smith's anvil." Many neighbours were called in, and they also heard the mysterious sounds. The master of the house was thoroughly alarmed, "but putting his trust in God, he resolved to address this supernatural disturber, and to ask what it meant and what it wanted. Accordingly, one night after he had lain some time in bed with his wife and children, upon hearing the noise accompanied with dismal groans, he sat up in bed and solemnly conjured it in the name of the Holy Trinity, to speak if it had anything to say to him. Inarticulate sounds of a faltering tongue unable to speak, accompanied with groans, were heard. The noise

soon after ceased, and did not return to disturb this family any more." The minister confidently vouches for the truth of the story; he had examined the witnesses, and testifies that they were "grave and serious." He adds:—"In this eminently enlightened age, when atheism and religion have been very active in bringing, not only superstition and enthusiasm, but religion itself to the guillotine, it is highly probable that the traits of character here exhibited will be held in derision, and the drawer thereof exposed to infinite ridicule on account of the preceeding narrative by those who glory in being superior to vulgar prejudices." But, be that as it may, he comforts himself with the reflection that the worst superstition is much less dangerous to church and state than scepticism.[1]

In another of these Northern islands we are told that "the existence of fairies and witches is seriously believed by some, who in order to protect themselves from their attacks draw imaginary circles and place knives in the walls of houses."[2] In this parish also they have a famous piper who, like him of Hamelin, is able by his music to charm rats from their houses. Again, still in the same district of the county, we hear of

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[1] Stronsay, xv. 430-3. [2] So. Ronaldshay, xv. 311.

other "freits." "On many days of the year they will neither go to sea in search of fish, nor perform any sort of work at home. On going to sea they would reckon themselves in the most imminent danger were they by accident to turn their boat in opposition to the sun's course. They do not marry but in the waning of the moon; and they would think the meat spoiled were they to kill the cattle when that luminary is wanting."[1] This respect shown to the phases of the moon is very common; but still higher is the reverence held for the sun. Hence the necessity for following its course in order to avert loss. The sun's way is the right way. It is thus explained: "Baal-tein signifies the fire of Baal. Baal or Ball is the only word in Gaelic for a globe. This festival was probably in honour of the sun, whose return in his apparent annual course they celebrated on account of his having such a visible influence by his general warmth on the productions of the earth. That the Caledonians paid a superstitious respect to the sun, as was the practice among other nations, is evident upon many other occasions. When a Highlander goes to bathe, or to drink out of a consecrated fountain, he must

[1] Kirkwall, vii. 560.

always approach by going round the place from east to west on the south side, in imitation of the apparent diurnal motion of the sun. When the dead are laid in the earth the grave is approached by going round in the same manner. The bride is conducted to her future spouse in the presence of the minister, and the glass goes round the company, in the course of the sun. It is called in Gaelic going round the right to the lucky way. The opposite course is the wrong or unlucky way. And if a person's meat or drink were to affect the windpipe, or come against his breath, they instantly cry out 'deisheal,' which is an ejaculation praying that it may go by the right way."[1] This appeal to the Deity is of the nature of a charm, of which there are many other examples. "There are none of the common calamities or distressful accidents incident to man or beast but hath its particular charm or incantation, generally made up of a group of unconnected words, and an irregular address to the Deity or some one of the saints. . . . With the common people the belief in the second sight is general, and the power of an evil eye is commonly credited; and although the faith in witchcraft be much enfeebled, the virtue of abstracting the

[1] Callander, xi. 621.

substance from one milk and adding it to another is rarely questioned. The ghosts of the dying, called *tasks*, are said to be heard, their cry being a repetition of the moans of the sick. Some assume the sagacity of distinguishing the voice of their departed friends. The corpse follows the track led by the *tasks* to the place of interment; and the early or late completion of the prediction is made to depend on the period of night at which the *task* is heard." [1] Even where, as in the neighbourhood of a large city, modern enlightenment is beginning to prevail, old beliefs die hard, and "the dregs of superstition are still to be found. The less informed suspect something like witchcraft about poor old women, and are afraid of their evil eye among the cattle. If a cow is suddenly taken ill it is ascribed to some extraordinary cause. If a person when called to see it does not say, 'I wish her luck,' there would be a suspicion he had some bad design." [2] This is a notion that was prevalent over the whole country, and indeed it is not yet entirely extirpated. It takes different forms in different districts. Thus we hear of "some people who put a small quantity of salt into the first milk of a cow after calving that is given any per-

[1] Applecross, iii. 380. [2] Gargunnock, xviii. 123.

son to drink. This is done with a view to prevent *skaith* if it should happen that the person is not *canny*. A certain quantity of cow dung is forced into the mouth of a new-born calf before it receives any meat; then the witches and fairies can have no power ever after to injure the calf."[1] In some parishes we are told of superstitions that at no distant time held sway among the people, but were then beginning to be given up. "About sixty years ago the lower class was tainted strongly with superstitious sentiments and opinions, but of late years they are almost obliterated. They firmly believed in ghosts, hobgoblins, fairies, elves, witches, and wizards. These ghosts and spirits often appeared to them at night. They used many charms and incantations to preserve themselves, their cattle, and houses from the malevolence of witches, wizards, and evil spirits, and believed in the beneficial effects of these charms. They believed in lucky and unlucky days and seasons in marrying or undertaking any important business. They frequently saw the devil, who made wicked attacks on them when they were engaged in their religious exercises and acts of devotion. They believed in benevolent spirits which they termed *brownies*, who

[1] Killearn, xvi. 121.

went about in the night time and performed for them some part of their domestic labour, such as threshing and winnowing the corn, spinning and churning. They fixed branches of mountain ash or narrow-leaved service-tree above the stalls of their cattle to preserve them from the evil effects of elves and witches."[1] The belief in lucky and unlucky days was general, although in many cases the reason for so regarding them was entirely forgotten. Thus in a certain parish 17th December was reckoned the fittest day in the year on which to kill a pig. On that day every person who owned a head of swine killed a sow; hence it was called Sow-day. "There is no tradition as to the origin of this practice."[2] Again, we are told that "no Sinclair throughout Caithness will put on green apparel, or cross the Ord on a Monday"; but a historical reason, whether it be the true one or no, is given for this peculiarity. It is alleged that the Sinclairs were dressed in green and crossed the Ord on a Monday when they set out for the fatal field of Flodden, from which scarce one returned.[3]

A curious instance of the survival of old heathen beliefs is related in connection with the church of

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[1] Tongland, ix. 328. [2] Sandwick, xvi. 460.
[3] Canisbay, viii. 156.

St. Vigean's. From the year 1699 to 1736 the Sacrament of the Lord's supper had not been dispensed in the parish, for the following extraordinary reason. There was a tradition that the water-kelpy, "the angry spirit of the water," had built the church, and had laid its foundations on large bars of iron over a lake of great depth ; and it was devoutly believed that the first time the Sacrament was dispensed the kelpy would withdraw his support and the church and whole congregation be swallowed up in the depths of the mysterious lake. It is not easy to see why the evil sprite should have erected a Christian church at all in these circumstances. At length a parson bolder than his predecessors resolved that the holy ordinance should no longer be pretermitted, let the result be what it might. The belief of what might happen "had taken such hold of the people's minds that on the day the Sacrament was administered some hundreds of the parishioners sat on an eminence about a hundred yards from the church, expecting every moment the dreadful catastrophe." One is relieved to hear that nothing happened, and that the superstition there and then received its death-blow. The minister seems almost to regret that now "it would prove a matter of great difficulty to make the people believe such absurdities;"

for, as he sagely remarks, "this much may be said in favour of credulity, that it generally flows from an honest heart, though, on the other hand, it is seldom the offspring of a well-informed head." [1]

But perhaps the best account of current superstition is given by the minister of Kirkmichael, in Banffshire, whose contribution to the *Statistical Account* is one of the most interesting in the whole collection. He makes no apology for entering into full detail; "even the weakness of the human mind," he says, "may afford some little entertainment." He speaks of the respect the people show to times and seasons; to the waxing and full moon, when every undertaking is likely to be favourable; to Hallow Eve, to Beltane or the 1st of May, and the first night of January. On this last they watch with anxiety the character of the weather. "As it is calm or boisterous, as the wind blows from the S. or N., from the E. or the W., they prognosticate the nature of the weather till the conclusion of the year.

> " Gaoth a deas, teas is torradh,
> Gaoth a niar, iasg is bainne,
> Gaoth a tuath, fuachd in gailinn,
> Gaoch a near, meas air chrannaibh.

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[1] St. Vigeans, xii. 173.

which is thus translated :—'the wind of the S. will be productive of heat and fertility ; the wind of the W., of milk and fish ; the wind from the N. of cold and snow ; the wind from the E. of fruit on the trees.'" They believe firmly in the existence of ghosts. "On the sequestered hill and in the darksome valley frequently does the benighted traveller behold the visionary semblance of his departed friend, perhaps of his enemy. The former addresses him in the language of affection ; if danger is approaching he is warned to prepare against it, or the means of avoiding it disclosed. By the latter he is attacked with the vehemence of resentment, and for a while the victory is in suspense. At length the ghost is overthrown, and then a few traits of his life upon earth are described. If he stole a ploughshare from a neighbour the place where it is concealed is pointed out. His antagonist is requested to restore it to the owner, and, if he fails, punishment is threatened ; for till restitution be made so long must the miserable culprit be excluded from the regions of the happy." But the result of seeing a ghost are not always so harmless. Cases have occurred where the fright has brought on loss of reason and even death. In like manner fairies are found everywhere. None doubt that they inhabit the green hillocks called

siothdhunan, or hills of peace. "Notwithstanding the progressive increase of knowledge and proportional decay of superstition in the Highlands these genii are still supposed by many of the people to exist in the woods and sequestered valleys of the mountains, where they frequently appear to the lonely traveller, clothed in green, with dishevelled hair floating over their shoulders, and with faces more blooming than the vermil blush of a summer morning. At night in particular, when fancy assimilates to its own preconceived ideas every appearance and every sound, the wandering enthusiast is frequently entertained by their music, more melodious than he ever before heard." The narrator, lest he should be suspected of drawing upon his imagination to turn a period, asserts in a note that there are several now living who have beheld "the visionary hunters engaged in the chase, and pursuing the deer of the clouds, while the hollow rocks in long-sounding echoes reverberate their cries. They have been suddenly surrounded by visionary forms, more numerous than leaves strewed on the streams of Vallambrosa in November blasts, and assailed by a multitude of voices louder than the noise of rushing waters." Here is a most conclusive testimony that must convince the least credulous of mortals. The wit-

ness is a clergyman returning late from a presbytery dinner. "About fifty years ago a clergyman in the neighbourhood, whose faith was more regulated by the scepticism of philosophy than the credulity of superstition, could not be prevailed upon to yield his assent to the opinion of the times. At length, however, he felt from experience that he doubted what he ought to have believed. One night as he was returning home at a late hour from a presbytery he was seized by the fairies and carried aloft into the air. Through fields of aether and fleecy clouds he journeyed many a mile, descrying, like Sancho Panza on his Clavileno, the earth far distant below him no bigger than a nut-shell. Being thus sufficiently convinced of the reality of their existence they let him down at the door of his own house, where he afterwards often recited to the wondering circle the marvellous tale of his adventure."

So, too, there are genii of the rivers and fountains. "To this day fountains are regarded with particular veneration over every part of the Highlands. The sick who resort to them for health address their vows to the presiding powers, and offer presents to conciliate their favour. These presents generally consist of a small piece of money or a few fragrant flowers. Near the kirk of

this parish there is a fountain once highly celebrated, and anciently dedicated to St. Michael, guarded by a spirit under the semblance of a fly. If the matron wished to know the issue of her husband's ailment, or the love-sick nymph that of her languishing swain, they visited the well of St. Michael. Every movement of the sympathetic fly was regarded in silent awe ; and as he appeared cheerful or dejected the anxious votaries drew their presages ; their breasts vibrated with correspondent emotions. So, too, lakes were believed to be inhabited by spirits. In Strathspey there is a lake still called the lake of spirits. Two of these are supposed frequently to make their appearance, the one under the form of a horse beautifully caparisoned with golden trappings. With the bit of his bridle the anti-conjuror of this parish repels jealousy and cures other maladies of the mind. The other under that of a bull, docile as Jupiter wafting Europa over the Hellespont. The 'mhaidan mhare' or mermaid is another spirit supposed to reside in the water. Before the rivers are swelled by heavy rains she is frequently seen. Her figure is enchanting, and her voice melodious as that of the syrens. But fair as she is, her appearance never fails to announce some melancholy accident on her native element. It is always considered a sure

prognostication of drowning." Traces of the belief in witchcraft are still to be found, but this parish is provided with a means of defeating all Satanic arts. "Even at present witches are supposed, as of old, to ride on broomsticks through the air. In this county the 12th of May is one of their festivals. On the morning of that day they are frequently seen dancing on the surface of the water of Avon, brushing the dews of the lawn, and milking cows in their fold. Any uncommon sickness is generally attributed to their demoniacal practices. They make fields barren or fertile, raise or still whirlwinds, give or take away milk at pleasure. The force of their incantations is not to be resisted, and extends even to the moon in the midst of her aerial career. There is, however, an anti-conjuror who defeats both them and their sable patron. If the spouse is jealous of her husband the anti-conjuror is consulted to restore the affections of his bewitched heart. If a near connection lies confined to the bed of sickness it is in vain to expect relief without the balsamic medicine of the anti-conjuror. If a farmer loses his cattle the houses must be purified by water sprinkled by him. If a person happens to be deprived of his senses the deranged cells of the brain must be adjusted by the magic charms of the anti-conjuror. In searching for the

latent mischief this gentleman never fails to find little parcels of heterogeneous ingredients lurking in the walls, consisting of the legs of mice, and the wings of bats ; all the work of the witches." [1]

In the foregoing account reference is made to the magical effects of certain consecrated fountains. Holy wells are still pointed out in almost every part of the country that were once regarded as health-giving. But in some wells there lurked also a mysterious power of controlling the elements. Such was the lucky well of Beathag, famous for having command of the wind. "Six feet above where the water gushes out, there is a heap of stones, which forms a cover to the sacred fount. When a person wished for a fair wind, this part was opened with great solemnity, the stones carefully removed, and the well cleaned with a wooden dish, or clam shell. This being done, the water was several times thrown in the direction from which the wished-for wind was to blow, and this action was accompanied with a certain form of words which the person repeated every time he threw the water. When the ceremony was over, the well was again carefully shut up to prevent fatal consequences, it being firmly believed that were the

[1] Kirkmichael, xii. 457-466.

place left open it would occasion a storm which would overwhelm the whole island. This ceremony of *cleaning the well*, as it is called, is now seldom performed, though there are still two old women who are said to have the secret, but who have cause to lament the infidelity of the age, as they derive little emolument from their profession." [1] But for the most part the sacred wells are regarded as efficacious for the cure of diseases of various kinds. In Shetland there is a spring called Ycla or Hicla Burn, "the burn of health," which, it is stated, "though pure water, is believed to be highly beneficial." Could human credulity go further than to believe pure water to be beneficial? The tribute required by the presiding genius of this spring is that each person that approaches should cast three stones on the neighbouring cairn. So modest a demand is generally complied with, and the result is that "a considerable pile has thus been raised." [2] Indeed the votive offerings seem everywhere to have been of the humblest kind. "There is at Balmano a fine spring well called St. John's Well, which in ancient times was held in high estimation. Numbers brought their ricketty children to be washed in its stream.

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[1] Gigha, viii. 52. [2] Unst, v. 185.

Its water was likewise thought a sovereign remedy for sore eyes. To show their gratitude to the Saint they put into the well pins, needles, and rags taken from their clothes, presents not indeed of any great value, or such as would have been the least service to him, but such as they conceived the good and merciful apostle, who did not delight in costly oblations, could not fail to accept."[1] Another well of especial efficacy for ricketty children was situated in Wigtownshire, near the Castle of Dunskey, and was held in great veneration. The children thus affected were supposed to be bewitched, and therefore it was important that they should be brought at the change of the moon. They are bathed in the stream and dried in a cave in the neighbourhood, and thereafter of course, more or less gradually, grow stronger.[2] So in Renfrewshire there is a well dedicated to St. Fillan, in which the women bathe their weak and ricketty children, and leave "some pieces of clothing as a present or offering to the saint on the bushes overhanging the well."[3] In Ross-shire there is a cave in which is a spring of water "to which the superstitious part of the people attribute a medicinal effect, and still repair to it on the first

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[1] Marykirk, xviii. 631. [2] Portpatrick, i. 47. [3] Kilallan, i. 316.

Sunday of every quarter for a cure to any malady or disease under which they happen to labour. The water is said to be particularly famous for restoring the sense of hearing by pouring a few drops of it into the affected ear." The minister does not doubt the fact, but he offers a rationalistic explanation of it: "In my opinion," says he, "this must be owing to the cold and piercing quality of the water forcing its way through the obstructions of the ear."[1] There is also a well that has a great reputation for curing madness as well as other troubles. "In the case of various diseases a pilgrimage is made to Strathfillan, about forty miles distant, where the patient bathes in a certain pool, and performs some other rites in a chapel which stands near. It is chiefly in the case of madness that the pilgrimage is believed to be salutary. The unfortunate person is first bathed in the pool, then tightly bound with cords and left for a night in the chapel. If he is found loose in the morning it is confidently expected he will recover."[2] But perhaps there is no spring of a more miraculous character than that in the parish of Comrie. This famous spring, like so many others, is dedicated to St. Fillan. It was originally at top of Fillan's

[1] Kilmuir Wester, xii. 275. [2] Logierait, v. 84.

Hill, and did a great deal of good; "but in disgust, probably at the Reformation, it removed suddenly to the foot of a rock a quarter of a mile to the southward, where it still remains, humbled indeed, but not forsaken. It is still visited by valetudinary people, especially on the 1st of May or 1st of August. No fewer than seventy persons visited it in May and August, 1791. The invalids, whether men, women, or children, walk or are carried round the well in a direction Deisheal, *i.e.*, from east to west according to the course of the sun. They also drink the water and bathe in it. These operations are accounted a certain remedy for various diseases, and are particularly efficacious for curing barrenness. All the invalids throw a white stone on the saint's cairn, and leave behind as tokens of their confidence and gratitude some rags of linen or woollen cloth. The rock on the summit is the saint's chair. Those who complain of rheumatism in the back must ascend the hill, sit in the chair, then lie down on their back and be pulled by the legs to the bottom of the hill. This operation is still performed, and reckoned very efficacious."[1] Such treatment could not fail at any rate to have a very distinct effect. It is worth

[1] Comrie, xi. 181.

noting that in every case much importance is attached to the date or season as an element in the cure. In one case at least, as we have seen, Sunday is the propitious day ; but this is not usual. On the contrary, the Holy Day is for some reason regarded as unfriendly to the sick. For example, "in fevers the illness is expected to be more severe on Sundays than on the other days of the week. If it is easier on Sunday, then a relapse is to be feared."[1] There is, too, almost invariably some acknowledgment to be made to the source of the healing power, whether such is regarded as heathen fairy or Christian saint. Such offerings are protected from being stolen partly by their intrinsic want of value, partly by fear of the wrath of the unseen Power. In Shetland, we are told that the people in time of sickness or danger "often made vows to this or the other favourite saint, at whose chapel they lodge a piece of money as a reward for their assistance ; and they imagine that if any person steals or carries off that money he will instantly fall into the same danger from which they, by their pious offering, had been so lately delivered."[2]

We do not hear much of wonder-working bells, although, from other sources, we know that there

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[1] Logierait, v. 83. [2] Kirkwall, vii. 560.

were many in different parts of the country. One, however, is described that owed its sanctity to the well-nigh ubiquitous St. Fillan. "It is about a foot high, and of an oblong form. When mad people were brought to be dipped in the Saint's pool, it was necessary to perform certain ceremonies in which there was a mixture of Druidism and Popery. After remaining all night in the chapel bound with ropes, the bell was set upon their head with great solemnity. It was the popular opinion that if stolen it would extricate itself out of the thief's hands, and return home ringing all the way." The narrator would fain describe this as an exploded superstition, but he somewhat naively remarks :—"For some years past this bell has been locked up to prevent it being used for superstitious practices."[1]

Among medical superstitions, none is more general than that which ascribes special healing power to the hands of certain individuals, especially to a seventh son. "There is a man in Iona of the name of Innis, who touches for the King's Evil. He is a seventh son, and it is firmly believed in the country that he has this gift of curing. He touches or rubs over the sore with his hand two

[1] Killin, xvii. 378.

Thursdays and two Sundays successively in the name of the Trinity, and says, "it is God that cures." He asks nothing for his trouble. It is believed if he did there would be no cure. He is often sent for out of the country, and, though he asks nothing, yet the patients or their friends make him presents. He is perfectly illiterate, and is accustomed to say that he does not know how the cure is effected, but that God is pleased to work it in consequence of his touch."[1] In one instance at least the healing touch is believed to belong to a whole clan. "There is a disease called *Glacach* by the Highlanders, affecting the chest and lungs. It is also called the MacDonalds' disease, because there are particular tribes of MacDonalds who are believed to cure it with the charm of their touch, and the use of a certain set of words. There must be no fee given of any kind."[2] Evidently this power was regarded by the possessors as the direct gift of God, which therefore it were the sin of Simony to use for their own personal profit.

There is a number of curious medical statements and wonderful remedies, which, though they are not "popular superstitions," may find a place here. The great scourge of the country was small-pox. The system of inoculation had been intro-

[1] Kilfinichen, xiv. 210. [2] Logierait, v. 84.

duced, but it only made way slowly against the bitter prejudice that was opposed to it. The people regarded it as a "tempting of God;" and, spite of all that their teachers and preachers could accomplish, they refused to submit themselves to it, preferring to die in their thousands. The ministers seem to have set themselves everywhere to break down the prejudice by inoculating their own households, or by offering to inoculate their parishioners free of charge. One calculates that not above one in forty escapes having the disease, and that of those seized the proportion of deaths is 1 in 5 or 6, whereas after inoculation, the proportion of deaths has been 1 in 500. He tells of a doctor who devised an ingenious scheme for overcoming the popular prejudice. "A surgeon in the north, presuming that self-interest has a stronger hold on man than superstition, has lately opened a policy of insurance for smallpox. If a subscriber gave him two guineas for inoculating his child, the surgeon, in the event of the child's death, pays ten guineas to the parent. For one guinea subscribed he pays four guineas; for one half-guinea, two guineas; and for a crown, one guinea."[1] There is no record of the amount of success that attended this experiment.

[1] Banff, xx. 349.

A story is told of a woman who was afflicted with fits of dumbness that lasted sometimes for years, during which her teeth were firmly fixed together so that food could be administered only with extreme difficulty. "For more than thirty years she has been thus occasionally possessed with a dumb spirit; but, when the spirit leaves her, she makes ample amends for her long silence."[1]

Fits evidently of an epileptic kind seem to have been common, especially in the Northern Isles. Curiously, they usually occurred in church, often on a sacramental occasion, which no doubt suggested the idea that they were due to the enemy of all religion. "Convulsion fits of a very extraordinary kind seem peculiar to this country. The patient is first seized with something like fainting, and immediately after utters wild cries and shrieks, the sound of which at whatever distanee immediately puts all, who are subject to the disorder, in the same situation. It most commonly attacks them when the church is crowded. On a sacramental occasion fifty or sixty are sometimes carried out of church and laid in the churchyard where they struggle and roar with all their strength for five or ten minutes, and then rise up without re-

[1] Carluke, viii. 128.

collecting a single circumstance that had happened them, or being in the least hurt or fatigued with the violent exertions they had made during the fit. One observation occurs on this disorder that during the late scarce years it was very uncommon, and during the last ten years of plenty it has appeared more frequently."[1] A beadle in the same district succeeded in completely exorcising this evil spirit without any magical arts. It was his duty to carry out of church those who were attacked, which he did in no gentle fashion. On one occasion "he tossed a woman with whom he was often plagued into a ditch full of water. She was never known to have the disorder afterwards; and others dreaded a like treatment, so that convulsion fits are now quite extinct in this parish."[2] There is a disease called the *louping ague*, that is more than once mentioned, and in one case is identified with St. Vitus' dance. "The patients when seized have all the appearance of madness. Their bodies are variously distorted. They run, when they find an opportunity, with amazing swiftness, and over dangerous passes; and when confined to the house they jump and climb in an astonishing manner till their strength is exhausted.

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[1] Delting, i. 386. [2] Northmavine (Shetland), xii. 363.

Cold bathing is found to be the most effectual remedy."[1]

There was a poor man in Peeblesshire who had rather a strange experience. He was induced by some of his neighbours to "swallow stones to help digestion after the manner of birds with muscular stomachs," with the result that he became seriously ill. He never quite recovered his health till sixteen years afterwards when being seized with vomiting he threw up several stones that had all this time been lodged in his stomach. The man was of decent character, and from his own, and his neighbours' report, there is no doubt of the fact. The largest stone was the size of a finger end. He threw up thirteen, which, being the Devil's dozen, might probably be the number swallowed."[2]

For the benefit of those who are fond of experimenting with old-fashioned remedies, we close with two recipes, one for asthma and the other for rheumatism. For asthmatic complaints: Take a quantity of "capillaire, vulgarly maiden-hair," and dry it in the sun; then infuse it in water and drink it as tea. Or it may be prepared by infusing it in its green state in water for a day or two, straining the liquor and boiling it up with sugar-candy into

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[1] Craig, ii. 496. Lethnot, iv., 5. [2] Linton, i. 131.

a syrup. "Good effects have been often experienced from the use of this plant, especially when prepared as a syrup."[1]

The cure for rheumatism will hardly find favour with teetotallers; but 150 years ago extreme temperance views had not yet been evolved. Briefly, the remedy is to get drunk on "new ale full of barm or yeast." One William Hunter had "an inveterate rheumatism or gout. The poor man had been confined to his bed for a year and a half, having almost entirely lost the use of his limbs. On the evening of Handsel Monday in 1758 some of his neighbours came to make merry with him. Though he could not rise yet he always took his share of the ale as it passed round the company, and in the end became much intoxicated. The consequence was that he had the use of his limbs the next morning, and was able to walk about. He lived more than twenty years after this, and never had the smallest return of his old complaint."[2]

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[1] Newabbey, ii. 130. [2] Tillicoultry, xv. 201.

Ecclesiastical and Theological.

ECCLESIASTICAL AND THEOLOGICAL.

Relation between Church and Dissent—evils of dissent—Seceder's prayer for parish minister—parties formed among Seceders—improvement in psalmody opposed—Lifters and Anti-Lifters—Camisars—Bereans—Buchanites—relation with R. C. Church—tolerance of priests—reasons for increase of R. C.—rude treatment of lettergae—sketch of Æneas Sage—curious story of piously giving up good works—too great indulgence in theological study condemned—the Drunken Bell—perlustrating the inns—registration of births opposed—specimen of collection for poor—Cambuslang conversions.

It is possible that the title of this chapter may suggest expectations that the materials at hand do not enable us to gratify. The parochial accounts of more than 900 ministers might well be supposed to yield a plentiful crop of ecclesiastical and theological anecdotes. But this is not at all the case. For the most part they confine themselves to answering the queries addressed to them, and rarely indulge in clerical reminiscences. I think some of the authors must often consciously have laid restraint upon their pens. Further one might have been prepared to find in these accounts a great deal of sectarian feeling directed against ecclesias-

tical dissent and its professors; but it is noteworthy, and highly to the credit of the clerical authors, that the traces of it are indeed very rare. The number of dissenters in a parish is usually given, and, of course, no regret is expressed that it is small; but there is almost unanimous testimony borne to the good feeling that exists between churchmen and non-conformists, and even between their respective pastors.

In one parish, however, in Fife, where the population was almost equally divided between the Established Church on the one hand, and Relief, Burghers, and Antiburghers, on the other, some soreness is apparent. "The divisions in this parish are surely among the greatest judgments which can befal any place. They are a judgment temporally, as they take away the substance of families to support ministers, and thus often prevent the just claims of others being paid. They are a judgment spiritually, as they extinguish that spirit of love and charity, the distinguishing characteristics of our holy religion. At the same time, the parish minister lives on very good terms with their clergy, who seem to be well disposed men, and he desires to love all who are lovers of the truth, though they differ in lesser matters. It is well for the ministers of the Established Church

that their subsistence does not depend on the caprice of the people, as the Relievers here lately turned off an inoffensive old man who had preached to them upwards of twenty years, and who must have suffered in the evening of life had not their injustice been compensated by the benevolence of a son." [1] At the beginning, indeed, of the Secession, the feeling often ran very strong, and the errors and corruptions of the Church were denounced by those who had separated from her in no measured terms. "As a specimen of the spirit and eloquence of these times the following part of a prayer for the Established minister of this place is kept in remembrance as uttered by one of the preachers on the green, after a discourse in which he was represented in the blackest colours: 'Thou knowest that the silly, snivelling body is not worthy even to keep a door in Thy house. Cut him down as a cumberer of the ground; tear him up root and branch, and cast the wild rotten stump out of Thy vineyard. Thresh him, Lord, and dinna spare! O thresh him tightly with the flail of Thy wrath, and mak a strae wisp o' him to stap the mouth of hell.'" [2]

Every one in Scotland is familiar with the

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[1] Auchtermuchty, vi. 341. [2] Symington, viii. 589.

repeated divisions and subdivisions that took place among the ranks of the Seceders. Any peculiarity in practice or in opinion was deemed sufficient to warrant the creation of an additional sect. In the ferment of the time, the slightest alteration in the accustomed order of worship was enough to cause a secession from the Church. The following instance was by no means exceptional. In a parish in Kincardineshire the minister was so ill-advised as to desire to improve the singing in church. Up to this time the practice had prevailed of the precentor reading each line of the psalm before it was sung. The minister resolved to introduce the novel method of "singing without intermission." But the righteous indignation of a narrow section of the congregation was at once aroused. "They were forced to acknowledge that the psalmody would be improved, but they urged that many who could not read would thereby be entirely excluded from joining in this part of public worship. Whether a regard to the good of others was the real, or only the ostensible cause of this opposition, or whether it proceeded from a dread of innovation, they persisted in it. They remonstrated again and again, and when their remonstrances were not attended to, abandoned the church, built one for themselves at Johnshaven,

and invited a minister of the Secession to settle among them."[1]

It is natural that the seceding spirit should not disappear in the Secession Church itself. It still continued and tended to further divisions and sub-divisions. We come upon some illustrations of the formation of new sects. For example, a Mr. Smyton was the minister of an Anti-Burgher congregation in Kilmaurs in Ayrshire. "A dispute took place between him and his associate brethren about lifting the bread in the Sacrament and holding it during the prayer of consecration. Mr. Smyton insisted that it is of religious obligation to observe this mode of dispensing our Lord's Supper, and positively enjoined by the words of the institution itself. By his brethren this action was considered as not binding the conscience, but that it might or might not be performed without incurring guilt. The argument was keenly agitated. At length it issued in a rupture. Mr. Smyton refused to hold communion with those who did not punctually conform to his opinion, and the Synod passed a sentence of expulsion against him for his obstinacy. He was formally deposed, but he despised the authority by which this was done,

[1] Benholme, xv. 224.

and continued to preach. Part of his congregation now separated from him, and part remained. The swarm that went off soon found for themselves a new meeting-house. They are distinguished by the appellation of Lifters, and Anti-Lifters, or New and Old Light."[1]

We hear of an heritor in an Aberdeenshire parish who joined the sect of the Camisars. He wrote down the rhapsodies of the preachers, on account of which service he described himself as "Clerk to the Holy Ghost." The only account of this sect vouchsafed is of the briefest: "They were a set of enthusiasts pretending to immediate inspiration, who, having sprung up in France towards the end of the last century, came over to Britain, and traversed the country to convert the people and reform the Church. They were called Camisars from the French word *chemise*, they being clothed in linen garments as emblems of their sanctity. At that time several people of education and fortune were seized with this extraordinary fury."[2]

In connection with the parish of Crieff we find mention made of a sect called Bereans, which arose in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Their founder had been a private tutor in the parish, and

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[1] Kilmaurs, ix. 375. [2] Cluny, x. 250.

the first adherents of the party were his own relatives. The following description of their tenets is given :—"Rejecting established articles and confessions of faith, they hold the Bible to be the only certain rule of faith and manners. At the same time they hold that none can be saved except such as have a full assurance of their own salvation, and that every one possessing this assurance is perfectly safe. That assurance, however, they do not pretend to build on the conformity of their actions to the rules of Christianity."[1]

A sect that attracted some attention at the time originated in the parish of Irvine, and was known as the Buchanites. The account of their proceedings is more moderate than that usually given. Mr. Whyte, the minister of the Relief congregation in Irvine, was first brought into contact with Mrs. Buchan when assisting at the communion in the neighbourhood of Glasgow. She was among his hearers, and afterwards wrote him a letter telling him how much she had been affected by his preaching, and expressing the wish to be associated with his congregation at Irvine. "This letter he showed to some of his people, who gave her a very welcome reception ; and from her heavenly

[1] Crieff, ix. 599.

conversation and extraordinary gifts, they soon began to consider her a very valuable acquisition to their party. Religion was the constant topic of her conversation ; in all companies, and upon all occasions, she introduced it. Her time was wholly taken up in visiting from house to house, in making family worship, solving doubts, answering questions, and expounding the Scriptures." But it would seem that ere long she began to develop strange and startling views, which not even her notable piety could render acceptable, and they became alarmed when they found that the minister unhesitatingly received them all as given by divine inspiration. " They expressed their dissatisfaction with his ministry, and desired him to dismiss her as a dangerous person. He refused to comply with their request, and they threatened to libel him. He remained firm to her interest, and in this he was supported by some of the most wealthy of his hearers. They drew up a paper containing what they supposed to be her principles and his, and desired him to declare whether these were his principles. He acknowledged that they were, and readily subscribed them as such. They carried the matter before their Presbytery, who thought fit to depose him from the office of the ministry." It needed only this apparent persecution to confirm

the more zealous in their fanaticism. Mr. Whyte continued to preach in a tent or in his own house. "The curiosity of the public was excited, and many frequented his meetings. Strange accounts were given of their doctrine and manner of worship. They usually met in the night time, and were instructed by this pretended prophetess. She gave herself out to be the woman spoken of in the Twelfth Chapter of the Revelation, and that Mr. Whyte was the man-child she had brought forth. This, and some other ravings she uttered, drew upon her and her party the indignation of the populace. Idle people assembled at different times in a tumultuous manner, surrounded the house, broke the windows and furniture, and would have proceeded to greater extremities had it not been for the intervention of the magistrates. After repeated applications from different members of the Relief congregation to have her apprehended and proceeded against as a blasphemer, the magistrates thought it prudent to dismiss her from the place, which was accordingly done, May, 1784. To protect the woman from insult they accompanied her about a mile out of town; but, notwithstanding all their efforts, she was grossly insulted by the mob, thrown into ditches, and otherwise ill-used on the way. She took up her residence that night,

with some of her followers, in the neighbourhood of Kilmaurs; and being joined by Mr. Whyte and others in the morning, the whole company, about forty in number, proceeded on their way to Mauchline, and from thence to Cumnock, and to Closeburn in Dumfriesshire, singing as they went and saying that they were going to the New Jerusalem."[1]

We find but few traces of an ultra-Protestant feeling; but this may perhaps be accounted for by the fact that in most parishes members of the Roman Catholic Church were far from numerous, and were not so assertive in their methods as at present. In the West Highlands, however, where the Reformation had never taken a strong hold, there were still many adherents of the ancient faith. It was doubtless hard for the parish minister when he found that the Roman Catholics had a better church than himself; but there is one who can console himself even under that trial. "Here the Roman Catholic priest has got an elegant meeting-house, and the Protestant clergymen the reverse of it; yet to an expiring mode of worship it would be illiberal to envy this transient superiority in a country where a succession of ages has witnessed its absurdities."[2] The liberality of the

[1] Irvine, vii. 181. [2] Kirkmichael, xii. 440.

sentiment might perhaps be questioned. The same narrator, however, is very well satisfied with his own breadth of mind. He declares his "aversion to every kind of illiberal intolerance. He allows the Roman Catholic priest to use every liberty, as if toleration had extended to this country. He allows him to marry and baptize, impose penalties and exact them among his own people in the same manner as if he were of the Established Church. The writer mentions this circumstance as he thinks it ought to be an invariable rule of conduct to practise that divine precept in doing to others as we should wish others to do unto us. [1]

A Highland minister, somewhat ashamed of the number of Roman Catholics among his parishioners, gives the following reasons for the growth of Popery. First, the registration of baptisms and the exaction of a fee of 1s. for each registration. "Many of the most ignorant considered this a heavy grievance ; and to avoid it applied to Roman Catholic priests for baptism, and in the heat of passion dragged whole families after them. Second, Popery has increased by intermarriages. When a Protestant marries a Roman Catholic woman he has very little domestic peace or happiness till he

[1] xii. 433.

professes that religion, in which, he is often told by his wife, salvation can alone be expected. This is a web which catches many a silly fly. Third, it is to be regretted that the people are subject to low and melancholy fits, which, as is conjectured, arises from too much hazy and damp weather. On these occasions a priest, with whom the art of exorcism is supposed to be found, attends for relief of the distressed. If it happens that a kind providence thereafter removes the malady, the glory of the cure redounds to human frailty, and the pretended miracle becomes the ground and ostensible reason of conversion. Lastly, the people in the district of Glenelclaig, where Popery prevails most, are extremely ignorant, and easily become the dupes of trafficking priests."[1] Another accounts for the continued respect in which Popery is held in some parts of the Highlands by the opinion which is very generally entertained "that a Popish priest can cast out devils and cure madness, and that the Presbyterian clergy have no such power." So inveterate is this belief that the minister, not without some touch of irritation, declares that "a person might as well advise a mob to pay no attention to a merry Andrew as to desire many ignorant people

[1] Kintail, vi. 251.

to stay from the priest. The most effectual antidote against this delusion is to lay before them some of the most laughable of the Popish miracles."[1]

It is well known that previous to the Revolution the Episcopalian ministers, who were tyrannically inducted into parishes against the will of the people, were often treated with scant respect by their congregations, amounting in some cases to the rudest irreverence. A ludicrous story, that well illustrates the state of feeling, is told of a certain Mr. Cumming, the last Episcopalian minister of the Parish of Halkirk. As was not unusual, the parishioners absolutely declined to take part in the religious services conducted by him. "There was no singer of psalms in church but the *lettergae*,[2] as they called the precentor, and one Tait, gardener in Braal. This Tait sung so loud and with such a large open mouth that a young fellow of the name of Iverach was tempted to throw a small round stone into his mouth, whereby his teeth were broke, and his singing stopped at once. Iverach immediately took to his heels, and the service was converted to laughter; but two of Tait's sons chased and overtook him, and the scene was closed with a most desperate fight.[3]

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[1] Lochcarron, xiii. 557.

[2] Lettergae, one who "lets gae" or starts the tune.

[3] Halkirk, xix. 49.

In the time of the Jacobite Rebellions, ministers of Highland parishes who held Whig principles had often serious difficulties with their flocks. Of one of these, Mr. Æneas Sage, the minister of a parish in Ross-shire, a sympathetic account is given by his successor in the charge. He was chosen, we are told, "by a wise Providence as a fit instrument for carrying forward its plans of mercy towards men." The wisdom of the choice, we suppose, is vouched for by the success of the methods employed by the "instrument." He was "a man of an undaunted spirit, who did not know what the fear of man was, but who had the fear of God and a great zeal for the good cause." He had also a good broadsword, and some skill in its use. He was not long in discovering the temper of the people he was sent to rule. Soon after his induction, the house in which he lodged was surrounded and set fire to when he was entertaining a party of clerical friends. But such a hot reception did not daunt his spirit. When he set out on a pastoral visitation, he carried with him not only the sword of the Spirit, but also a trusty claymore. Where the one failed, the other was seldom unavailing. For example, there was a wicked fellow who kept a mistress in the same house as his lawful married wife. Into this house Mr. Sage entered and boldly

bade the master incontinently dismiss the light of love. The Highlander replied by drawing his dirk and ordering the rash intruder to withdraw. But, sword in hand, the minister stood his ground, and after a fight succeeded in disarming his antagonist, and having him at his mercy. He then dictated his terms which were accepted, and the mistress was sent packing. On another occasion, one Mr. Campbell, Seaforth's factor, chose to take offence at something the minister had said, or done, and challenged him to fight a duel. He was an arrant coward, and sent his challenge for a Sunday morning, under the idea that Mr. Sage must refuse to accept on such a day. But the minister knew his man, and did not fail to keep the appointment; and when the factor saw the sharp blade in Mr. Sage's hand, his courage fled, and he himself also. By such means "he struck terror into vice; and by enforcing the discipline of the Church, and composing differences among the people, he reduced them to a state of civilization. He ploughed up the fallow ground, plucked up many of the thorns and weeds, and made it easier for his successors to sow the good seed." For forty-seven years he laboured among them, and was eminently successful in implanting the truths of religion. But the writer of the Statistical Account is not

quite sure that the people have maintained their profession of religion. "As Mr. Sage made the parish very orthodox, the people seem to think that they have at least as much religion as their neighbours. They seem to have a strong attachment to religion, and yet they would be the better of a little more. They at times appear willing to hear what they shall do to inherit eternal life. Although many of them do not dislike the present world, it cannot be said that they have entirely forgot the next; but it must be owned that very few of them would refuse a dram if it was offered them."[1]

There is no necessary connection between orthodoxy and dram-drinking; but a most extraordinary instance is related of how piety and a strict adherence to Calvinistic dogma led directly to an even greater transgression of the moral law. It is a curious adaptation of the doctrine that there is no room for human merit in the plan of divine mercy. "A whimsical but pious old man died here lately, who, from his extreme humility, and mistaken respect to the doctrines of grace, resolved to abandon the practice of good works for six weeks, lest, as he said, he should be tempted to boast of them alone,

[1] Lochcarron, xiii. 555.

to the dishonour of his Maker, as if meriting at the hand of God." So far it does not appear that the narrator was disposed to condemn the mistake very strongly; but there is unquestionable evidence of enjoyment of the joke when he adds: "Of his having adhered to his resolution, a female domestic gave to the world, about nine months after, a living and pregnant proof." [1]

It was regarded as part of the minister's duty to direct the reading of his people; but surely not many felt it incumbent on them to protest against too great devotion to works on theology and religion. But there is at least one who laments that "the vulgar read almost nothing but books on religious subjects. Many of them are too fond of controversial divinity; a taste which the dissenters are very diligent in promoting, and which the few books they are acquainted with are rather calculated to confirm. To discourage this unhappy propensity, so common through a great part of Scotland, and to recommend books of a more rational and instructive nature, seems an object worthy of a clergyman." [2] But the experience of this minister is not altogether unique. There is another who is not quite satisfied with the

[1] Carluke, viii. 128. [2] Kirkpatrick-Juxta, iv. 524.

exclusive devotion of his people to reading of a puritanic and religious order, and broadly hints that it does not help much to a good life. Their practice manifestly was not in strict accord with their profession. "The people formerly were fond of long church services, and considered it as a point of duty to continue long in religious exercises. Perhaps the services, though shorter than before, are still too long for answering the ends of devotion and spiritual edification. Puritanic and abstruse divinity come in for a sufficient share in their little stock of books ; and it is perhaps peculiar to them as a people that they endeavour to form opinions, by reading as well as by frequent conversation on some very metaphysical points connected with religion, and on the deeper doctrines of Christianity. . . . They have all a profession of religion, but, in the points where their situation leads to temptation, they too frequently and even habitually contradict their profession. . . . The holidays besides Sabbaths for religious services are in the Establishment three days in the year, among the Seceders six."[1]

In some districts it was the custom to hold a market on Sunday after divine service, which led

[1] Auchterderran, i. 456.

to a great deal of drinking; but after the market was given up the drinking often continued; "in so much that the minister was obliged to compound the matter, to allow a certain time after public worship, and then to cause ring what was called the *Drunken Bell;* after which he visited the ale-houses and dismissed any who remained in them. This practice, however, ceased before the incumbent's time, though he has been obliged to take a step through the village, after dinner, and break up drinking companies." He states with some degree of pride that the number of ale-houses is greatly diminished, that there are only thirteen ale-houses and three inns in the parish.[1]

The clerical supervision of the drinking habits of the people was at one time very strict, though at the period of the Statistical Account it would seem to have been, in large measure, given up. One minister recalls the time when seven elders were selected to watch over the morals of the people of the parish. "Great was then the need for inspecting parochial conduct. Little regard was paid to the Sabbath. On that day some were occasionally convicted of having fished with the rod or the net. Scarcely was there a Sabbath on

[1] Fordyce, iii. 64.

which some delinquent was not justly and publicly reproved ; and it was seen necessary, after public worship was finished, to send a committee of the Kirk-Session to perlustrate the inns of the parish."[1]

When an attempt was made to secure the proper registration of births, with which was associated a small fee to the schoolmaster who acted as registrar, it was resented very strongly. The small fee demanded was made a matter of conscience, and all kinds of devices were sought in order to evade it. As one minister puts it : "Their chief objection is on the score of religion. Connecting births with baptism, it is considered as a tax on that ordinance. Viewing it in this light, the idea of paying for the sacrament is, of all others, the most impious and profane. It is supposed to imply a contempt of all the blood that has been shed in the Protestant cause, and as giving freedom to the beast with the seven heads and ten horns to trample the memory of the old Covenanters under his feet."[2]

The care of the poor had always been one of the most important duties of the Kirk Session in each parish. The funds available for this purpose were often exceedingly small, and yet there is an

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[1] Monifieth, xiii. 498. [2] Symington, viii. 589.

almost unanimous opinion against the imposition of a poor rate. The principal source of relief was the church door collections. In some cases these yielded an altogether inadequate amount. Here is one instance:—"The number of the old and infirm at present on the list amounts to 32 persons, while the annual collections came to no more than 42/6½ stg." Over this amount the writer grows sarcastic: "In this large treasure, designed to be incorruptible beyond the power of moths and rust, there were one shilling, five sixpences, 443 pennies, and 50 farthings." Out of his own miserable stipend of £47 4s. 5⅓d. the minister calculates that he expends in charity not less than £7. He appeals to the wealthy for some help, and adds this inducement: "Such charity might contribute to secure for themselves a property in a more permanent country and better climate than the present."[1]

The only other matter that seems worthy of notice in this connection is the famous Cambuslang Revival, that took place, about the middle of the eighteenth century, and that is associated with the name of George Whitefield. In these days, when a "Revival" is quite common, when the methods of producing the required phenomena are stereo-

[1] Kirkmichael, xii. 436.

typed so that the time and place where it shall take place are arranged beforehand, it attracts but little notice. But in 1742 it was otherwise. Scotland had no experience of this kind of particular kind of religious excitement, and the proceedings at Cambuslang roused a deep and wide-spread interest. That a supernatural influence was at work was generally admitted; but it was hotly discussed whether its source was divine or diabolic. Seeing that the movement took place within the pale of the Established Church, Seceders had little hesitation in affirming that it must be from the devil. Reading the sympathetic account given by the minister of Cambuslang, not the originator of the revival, but his successor, the movement seems to us simple and natural enough. The people are gradually roused by special religious meetings at which the chief topics of discourse are the wonderful conversions that are taking place elsewhere under the ministry of Whitefield. The meetings attracted strangers from Glasgow and the neighbourhood; and the style of preaching was expressly designed to excite feelings of fear and terror. Soon it became impossible for some of the poor people, especially women, to restrain their emotions; the meetings were interrupted by their "crying out in the most public and frightful manner, bewailing

their lost and undone condition, declaring that they saw the mouth of hell open to receive them, and and that they heard the shrieks of the damned. The agony under which they laboured was expressed not only in words, but also by violent agitations of the body ; by clapping their hands and beating their breasts ; by shaking and trembling ; by faintings and convulsions, and sometimes by excessive bleeding at the nose. Some women declared that while they were under conviction they endured more bodily pain than they had even done in child-bearing." No attempt was made to control the excitement. On the contrary, the minister "called out to them to encourage their convictions and not to stifle or smother them." They spent the night in listening to heated exhortations and prayers. "Next day before sermon began they were brought out with napkins tied round their heads, and placed all together on seats before the tent, where they remained sobbing, weeping, and often crying aloud, till the service was over. Some of those who fell under conviction were never converted, but most were converted in a few days, and sometimes in a few hours. In most cases it was sudden and unexpected." We get an illustration of the mode of procedure. Two of the most zealous assistants in the work were a

shoemaker and a weaver. These men made it their business to be at hand whenever any one seemed to be affected. "One day when a woman who had fainted began to revive, the weaver says to her, 'Christ is just a-coming; He is on the way; He will not tarry;' and a little after the shoemaker added, 'Do you hear the sound of his chariot wheels?' Upon which the woman got up in a transport of joy, crying 'He is come! I have got Him and will not let Him go.'"

With the arrival of Whitefield on the scene, the excitement grew apace. As many as thirty thousand people were present on one occasion at "Conversion Brae." It lasted for six months, and then ceased as suddenly as it had begun.

As we have said, the "Cambuslang Wark" was not universally approved. "The Seceders had left the Established Church, and formed themselves into a separate community under the name of the Associate Presbytery; they had published a testimony against the corruptions and defections of the Established Church, disowning her authority, and declaring her judicatories to be ill-constituted and unlawful courts. They could not therefore believe that God would countenance so corrupt a Church by such a gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit. But as the work at Cambuslang was extraordinary

in itself, and as they could not believe it proceeded from the Holy Spirit, they concluded it must proceed from the devil. In an Act dated 15th July, 1742, they appointed a day of fasting and humiliation in all their congregations, one of the principal grounds of which was "The delusions of Satan attending the present awful work upon the bodies of men going on at Cambuslang." The attacked party replied, asserting "that this Act of the Associate Presbytery was the most heaven-daring paper which had been published by any set of men in Britain for a century past. A paper war ensued, in which the parties treated each other with abunddance of freedom, but, at the same time, with many professions of Christian love and charity."[1]

This bitter controversy seems to have been the most notable result of the great Cambuslang Revival.

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[1] Cambuslang, v. 267-274.

Schools and Schoolmasters.

SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLMASTERS.

Schoolmasters miserably paid—Act of William and Mary—Average salary—Schoolmaster of Heriot—of Kirkpatrick-Juxta—of Duthil—of Durris, statement of income—of Gargunnock—of Kilmacolm—of Falkland—of Glenholm—of Ecclesmachan—of Traquair—irregular attendance—reading by scholars in church—Schoolmaster the reader in church—private teachers—Ancient schoolmistress—dues from cock-fighting—Grammar Schools—High School of Glasgow—of Edinburgh—of Falkirk—of Dunbar—of Kilmarnock—of Nairn.

THE picture presented in these Accounts of the state of education at the close of the eighteenth century may well astonish those who have been accustomed to hear of the wonderful excellence and success of the parish school system in Scotland. There is almost universal complaint that the schoolmaster has fallen on evil days, and that unless something is at once done to improve his condition the schools must be closed and the children suffered to grow up without the elements of education. The root of the evil was the miserable salary that was provided by law, which the people were either unable or unwilling to augment. The

Act of William and Mary appointing that there should be a school and schoolmaster in every parish, that the salary should not be under one hundred merks, nor above two hundred, and that the heritors should be required to pay this salary in the same way as ministers' stipend, had been not unsuitable for the time. But a century had passed, and what was once a fairly adequate provision had become totally inadequate to the altered circumstances. With the great increase in the cost of living, it may be taken that the value of money was little more than a fourth of what it had been when the Act was passed. The legal salary is, of course, stated in Scots money; and accordingly the minimum was £5 11s. 1⅓d. sterling, and the maximum just double that amount. In some few cases there were local bequests, the interest of which formed an addition to the salary; the schoolmaster received some scanty fees from his scholars; and he usually held the office of session-clerk, precentor, etc. Yet, inclusive of all perquisites and emoluments, more than half of the parish schoolmasters in Scotland received less than £16 per annum. It is true what by courtesy was called a dwelling-house was usually provided, but it was often a mere hovel of one apartment, and not seldom so ruinous as to be unfit for occupa-

tion. To add to his grievances, the heritors usually divided his legal salary among their tenants, leaving him to collect it, in sums of a few pence, as best he could. In the process it could hardly fail but that some portion remained unpaid. The humblest labourer in the fields was better fed and housed than the instructor of youth.

In speaking of the condition of the farm servant, we have cited a few instances of how their income was expended. It will be apparent that the parish schoolmaster could not afford to live on that not too liberal scale, though it is not easy to see on what item of expenditure a further economy could be practised. Naturally the small rural parishes were, as a rule, the worst; in some of them the whole emoluments did not exceed £8 or £9. Perhaps, however, there were few quite so bad as the following. It is a small parish in Mid-Lothian. "The schoolmaster's salary is one hundred merks. The average number of scholars is ten. The smallness of the number is owing to the age and infirmity of the teacher, to his ignorance of the languages, and particularly to his want of a schoolhouse. He has only a small cottage, and an area of about eight feet by sixteen taken off the end of it as his school; and even this is crammed with tables, forms, and other household stuff, as the school-

master has no place else to lodge them. The fees for teaching to read English are one shilling, for writing and arithmetic one shilling and sixpence the quarter. He is also precentor, session clerk, beadle, gravedigger, and yet his whole income does not exceed £8 sterling per annum. This, with the paltry accommodation, holds out little encouragement to a teacher of any merit. Indeed, no man who possesses strength to lift a mattock or to wield a flail would accept of such a disgraceful pittance."[1] Only dire necessity, one would think, could drive a man to occupy such a situation on such terms. Yet, as a rule, these parish schoolmasters were men of some education. The following example is rare. In a parish in the County of Dumfries, "the salary is only £11, and the wages for reading are no more than one shilling a quarter. The number of scholars in summer is very small, in winter forty or fifty. Had not the present teacher been disabled from working as a common mason he must have spurned at such a livelihood as this."[2] Many schools that had once had cultured teachers had now naturally fallen into the hands of inferior men. For example, in one parish where the salary and all perquisites amount to about £12 sterling, the

[1] Heriot, xvi. 54. [2] Kirkpatrick-Juxta, iv. 520.

number of scholars has much diminished. "The number of scholars during the winter season is about thirty. In former years, when a number of gentlemen's families resided, there were usually about seventy scholars, some of whom were sent yearly to the University. But the salary is now so inadequate to the expense of living that no proper schoolmaster can be had; so that the gentlemen are obliged to send their children at a great expense to distant counties to school."[1] Usually, of course, it is the minister who reports regarding the state of education in his parish, but in one case we have the schoolmaster's own carefully tabulated statement of his income :—

Salary, £100 Scots, ...	£8	6	8
,, as Session Clerk, ...	1	10	0
,, as Clerk to Hogg's Trust, ...	0	10	0
Dues of baptisms, 6½d. each, about ...	0	9	6
,, marriages, 6½d. ,, ,, ...	0	3	0
,, Extracts of baptisms, 3d. each,	0	1	6
School Fees *communibus annis*, ...	4	0	0
Small garden, worth about	0	5	0
Total amount of Salary and perquisites,	£15	5	8

The number of Scholars is from 30 to 40 in winter, and between 20 and 30 in summer."[2] As we have said, this indicates the condition of more

[1] Duthil, iv., 311. [2] Durris, iii., 601.

than one half of the schoolmasters in Scotland. Usually the school buildings are of the worst description ; but here is a case where the school-house was evidently regarded as particularly commodious. "It has two floors, the first for the school, the second for the habitation of the schoolmaster. During the winter season there may be 50 or 60 scholars ; and yet the whole income, including salary, perquisites as Session Clerk, and school fees, scarcely amount annually to £16. The reading of English is taught for a merk Scots (1s. 1⅓d.) per quarter, writing and arithmetic for 2 shillings, fees which are by no means adequate to the troublesome task of the master. When a man decently qualified submits to the drudgery of training up children in several important branches of education, common-sense must revolt at the idea of his being in a worse situation than a day-labourer."[1] Yet on such a salary not a few were bold, or reckless, enough to seek to maintain a wife and family—truly a very frugal maintenance it must have been. In a parish in Renfrewshire, "the schoolmaster's salary is 100 merks, and the fees for teaching English 1s. 6d. per quarter, writing 2s., and arithmetic 3s. He is allowed one

[1] Gargunnock, xviii. 115.

pound stg. for being session clerk and precentor, which, together with 1s. for each proclamation is his living, amounting in all to £15 or thereby, by which he frugally maintains a wife and three children at present."[1] In another parish he expends nearly the whole of his legal stipend, which is £6 10s., in hiring a house and garden. His advanced scholars, taking Latin and arithmetic, pay him 2s. 6d. per quarter, but the English scholars only 1s. 6d. He has more than 80 scholars yet, of course, he cannot afford to pay an assistant. The former days, when the legal provision was still tolerably adequate, are recalled with regret. "Education was universally diffused. The lowest classes of the people were taught to read the Scriptures and instructed in the first principles of religion and morality, and were thus prepared in schools for being further enlightened and improved by the theological and moral lectures of Churches. Hence the distinguished superiority of the common people of Scotland in knowledge and sobriety. Parish schools have hitherto been the great nurseries for the Church and many other learned professions. All who value these advantages, and wish to secure them to their country,

[1] Kilmacolm, iv. 277.

will see the necessity of interposing for the greater encouragement of that order of men, on whose abilities and fidelity they so much depend." [1] One might have expected that in such circumstances the schoolmaster would have sought to supplement his scanty income by some other employment. But apparently the people did not approve of this. Thus, in a parish in Peeblesshire, where the income was the minimum, "the salary and emoluments do not amount to the value of a labouring servant's wages and board. Hence the present schoolmaster, finding his income quite insufficient for the support of his family, has had recourse to shopkeeping, and this has created a prejudice against the school, and made several averse from sending their children to it, apprehending that the course of teaching will be much interrupted by the business of the shop, which has greatly reduced the number of scholars, whereby the education of the youth in this place sustains a loss that is to be regretted." [2]

On every hand we hear loud complaints of the present condition of the schoolmaster, and mournful foreboding as to the future fate of education in the country. Thus the minister of a rural parish

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[1] Falkland, iv. 447. [2] Glenholm, iv. 433.

in West Lothian describes the miserable condition of the parish schoolmaster. There is the usual account of inadequate salary—100 merk Scots, with 20s. as precentor and session clerk. "His perquisites and school fees through the year will not exceed 20s. more. No person qualified for the instruction of youth can be supposed to subsist on such a pittance, while an ordinary plowman or barnman can make at the rate of £14 or £15 a year." And then he adds the reflection: "The want of proper schoolmasters is the principal cause of the ignorance, bigotry, and sectarism, which now prevail in many parts of this country. In former times, the commons of Scotland were justly accounted the most enlightened people of their station in Europe; but they will probably soon cease to deserve that honourable distinction if the plans, which are now in agitation, for additional encouragement to schoolmasters are treated with neglect." [1]

Here is another typical example of the condition of the country schoolmaster. "At an average there are 30 scholars, who may be taught English, writing, arithmetic, and book-keeping. The teacher can also teach mensuration. For a

[1] Ecclesmachan, ii. 370.

country schoolmaster he has an exceeding good hand of writing, and teaches both arithmetic and book-keeping very well; though few of his scholars are able to attend so long as to feel much benefit by his accomplishments. The emoluments of his office are very scanty, and no way adequate to his usefulness, which, though no partial evil to that race of men, renders it the more to be regretted. He receives £6 from the heritors, and £5 5s. for educating poor children; the fees arising from the office of session clerk annually may amount to £1 10s. As a precentor he is well qualified for his office. His whole emoluments can hardly exceed £20, and with that, by great economy, he supports decently a wife and five small children." [1]

The fees were certainly humble enough, yet we hear of districts of the country where parents, anxious to secure education for their children, were yet unable to afford the cost. The small sum raised by young children by herding was often an indispensable contribution to the household economy. Thus we are told that in one school the number in attendance varies from twenty to fifty. It is explained that this great fluctuation is due to

[1] Traquair, xii. 377.

the children "being sent to attend to the cattle in the hills during the summer months, and returning to school in the beginning of winter. They are naturally fond of learning, shrewd, and of quick apprehension; but parents are often unable to afford the expense of giving their children even the common education to be obtained in the country, and on this account the greater number of them are so illiterate that they can neither read nor write."[1] As a rule, however, the children did receive a certain amount of elementary education. One minister in Forfarshire devised a scheme, of which he was not a little proud, whereby he at once encouraged education and also instructed the parents. "During the summer months, in the interval between forenoon and afternoon worship, a few of the scholars are employed every Sunday for half an hour at least in reading publicly a portion of the Old and New Testament; after which a catechetical exercise follows. These lessons are duly prepared the preceding day in school. This practice inspires a degree of emulation among the scholars, and affords the people an opportunity of marking the gradual improvement of the children's knowledge, while, at the same time, their own may be

[1] Kingussie, iii. 42.

advanced."[1] In many cases it was the custom for the schoolmaster to spend half an hour or more in reading the Scriptures before the beginning of the forenoon service to such as chose to attend. In one parish an endowment had been left for the schoolmaster on the express condition that he "shall read portions of Scripture to the congregation betwixt the second and third bells." In the event of this condition not being fulfilled, the endowment is to be forthwith transferred to another parish. The endowment in question amounts to the considerable sum of £100 stg., which yields £5 stg. per annum. The pious donor is highly commended. "How honourable to himself is such testimony of his gratitude to God who hath blessed him with prosperity! How beneficial to society is such benevolence! There is no class of men more useful than schoolmasters when attentive to their duty, and few worse provided. Their salaries are small, their perquisites inconsiderable, and their payments, by the poor, not very punctual."[2]

In not a few sparsely inhabited parishes, where there were families remote from the school, it was a common custom to engage a youth who had completed his education, in some cases a student

[1] Auchterhouse, xiv. 524. [2] Forglen, xiv. 539.

at the university, who for a small sum educated the children of two or three households, living in each in turn. Thus in Galloway they "hire young lads into their families, that have been bred at the public school, to teach the children English and the first principles of writing and arithmetic, which they can do for £3 or £4 per year. When four or five families lie contiguous to one another they hire a teacher among them, for which they pay from £5 to £6, with victuals; and by this means all the children in the parish are taught to read and write."[1] In some districts they make even more economical arrangements. In Dunoon there are eight schools, but four of them are held only during winter. "The winter schools are taught by children from 12 to 15 years of age, who go from house to house, for about 20s. and their maintenance, to teach younger children than themselves; and it is surprising with what success they go through that business."[2] In contrast with these extremely youthful pedagogues, we may note the case of a woman in another parish, "who has taught young children to read English, and knit stockings for upwards of 40 years with great success; and, what is very extraordinary, has still a few scholars,

[1] Kells, iv. 269. [2] Dunoon, ii. 389.

who make very good progress under her instruction, though she is upwards of 90 years of age. Her name is Jean Lesly; she has been a very useful member of society." [1]

There is one perquisite of the schoolmaster, which, though it is believed to have been common, is only once incidentally mentioned, that derived from cock-fighting. The fight was held in the schoolroom, and the slain birds were the property of the teacher. In Applecross his salary was 200 merks Scots; but "he hath no perquisites but the quarter's payment of 1s. 6d. for English scholars and 2s. 6d. for Latin and arithmetic, and the cock-fight dues, which are equal to one quarter's payment for each scholar." [2]

In addition to the elementary schools there were usually to be found, at least in the larger burghs, Grammar or High Schools. Thus in the city of Glasgow we are told that "a very elegant building has lately been erected for the public grammar school, in which the course of education is four years, and is conducted by four masters, who each carry on their classes the whole time, having equal salaries of £25 each for the first three years, and £35 for the fourth year. Each scholar pays 5s. per

[1] Aberdour, xii. 580. [2] Applecross, iii. 378.

quarter, besides a present at Candlemas ; and for some years each of the classes has generally consisted of from 80 to 100 scholars." The management of the school is in the hands of a Committee of Town Council, "who take the superintendence of it, and who, with advice of the Professors of the University, settle the plan of reading, etc., in the different classes ; and along with them the ministers, and other persons of learning, visit the school frequently without giving any previous notice." [1]

In the case of Edinburgh we are informed that in 1777 "a new, elegant, and commodious edifice for a Grammar School was built by voluntary subscription, which cost £4000. It consists of one great hall, five teaching rooms, and a library, with smaller apartments. In 1763 the number of boys at the Grammar School was not more than 200 ; but in 1783 it had risen to 500,—it is believed the most numerous school in Britain." [2] There were grammar schools also at Aberdeen, Kilmarnock, Hamilton, Paisley, Dunbar, Falkirk, and other places, but little information is vouchsafed regarding them. The Grammar School of Falkirk, we learn, "is justly held in great reputation." In the town of Dunbar "there are 3 schools, a Grammar

[1] Glasgow, v. 530. [2] Edinburgh, vi. 591.

School, a Mathematical School, and an English School. The masters of these schools have each a house and a genteel salary. They are chosen and paid by the town."[1] One would have liked to know the amount that was deemed a "genteel" salary. The burgh of Kilmarnock would seem to have been well provided with educational facilities. "There are two public and established schools in the town, besides a number of private ones. First, there is a Grammar School for the sole purpose of teaching Latin and other languages. The master has £12 2s. of salary, 5s. per quarter from each of his scholars, besides a voluntary offering at Candlemass. There is next an English School, the master of which has £10 of salary, 2s. 6d. per quarter from such as read English, 3s. from such as read English and write, and 4s. from those who are also taught arithmetic. These schools are flourishing and well attended."[2]

In Nairn, also, there is a very flourishing Grammar School, although the teacher receives but very scanty encouragement. "The number of scholars is seldom below 80, and often exceeds 100. Gentlemen from all quarters of the country, and some from England, send their children to be

[1] Dunbar, v. 482. [2] Kilmarnock, ii. 94.

educated here. Every branch of education, which now makes such a noise in the academies, is taught at Nairn in perfection. Several scholars are annually sent to some one or other of the Universities; and many gentlemen who now make a figure in distant parts of the world, and not a few who are ornaments to their country at home in the learned professions, received their education at Nairn from the present teacher. The salary is only a chalder of victual; and even that paid in pecks and lippies by the tenants." In a note the narrator makes the natural reflection: "What a pity that men of abilities and character, who dedicate their time and labours to the improvement of youth, should be so poorly rewarded. It is truly melancholy to think that grooms and footmen should receive such extravagant wages, whilst a body of men, on whose labours the welfare of society doth so much depend, should, in a manner, be neglected and overlooked." [1]

[1] Nairn, xii. 385.

Tales and Legends.

TALES AND LEGENDS.

John o' Groat's House—St. Maccharmaig—The Setons of Clatto—Siege of Castle Strome—James of the Hill—How the McKays got Eddrachyllis—Saved by a Commentary—A Life for a Breakfast—Boiling a Sheriff—The Ferintosh Privilege—How the Regalia was preserved—The Mansworn Rig—Picture painted in agony—Helen of Kirkconnell—Nine Maidens' Well—Fair Lilliard—Willie Wastle—Bessie Bell and Mary Gray—Statistical Verses by Minister of Lochcarron.

IT was no part of Sir John Sinclair's purpose in the Statistical Account of Scotland to collect the stories preserved by local tradition, and it is only incidentally that some of these find a place in it. Out of these we have selected those that seemed, for various reasons, to be of most interest. No attempt is made to classify them, or to arrange them in any particular order. We begin, as we might have begun with any other, with the story of

JOHN O' GROAT'S HOUSE.

"From Maidenkirk to John o' Groat's" is a popular mode of describing the whole of Scotland, from its southern to its northern extremity. The

name originated, we are told, "in an event not unpleasing to relate, and which furnishes a useful lesson of morality." In the reign of James IV., three brothers, Malcolm, Gavin, and John de Groat, probably originally from Holland, arrived in Caithness, and got possession by purchase and otherwise of lands on the shores of the Pentland Firth. In the course of time we find these lands held by eight different proprietors of the name of Groat. "These eight families having lived peaceably and comfortably in their small possessions for a number of years, established an annual meeting to celebrate the anniversary of the arrival of their ancestors. In the course of their festivity on one of these occasions, a question arose respecting the right of taking the door and sitting at the head of the table, and such like points of precedency, which but for the interposition of John de Groat, might have led to serious consequences. He being proprietor of the ferry, and having acquired more knowledge of mankind by his constant intercourse with strangers passing the Pentland Firth, saw the danger of such disputes, and began by expatiating on the comfort and happiness they had hitherto enjoyed since their arrival in that remote corner, by reason of the harmony which had subsisted among them. He assured them that as soon as

they were seen to quarrel among themselves their neighbours would fall upon them, take their property from them, and expel them from the country. He conjured them by the ties of blood and their mutual safety, to return quietly that night to their several homes; and he pledged himself that he would satisfy them all with respect to precedency, and prevent the possibility of such disputes among them at their future anniversary meetings. They all acquiesced and departed in peace. In due time John de Groat, to fulfil his engagement, built a room distinct by itself, octagonal in shape, with eight doors and windows in it; and, having placed in the middle a table of oak, of the same shape, when the next anniversary meeting took place, he desired each of them to enter at his own door, and each to sit at the head of the table. By this ingenious contrivance any dispute in regard to rank was prevented, and their former harmony and good humour were restored. That building was then named John o' Groat's House, and though the house is totally gone, the place where it stood still retains the name, and deserves to be remembered as long as good intentions and good sense are estimable in a country."[1]

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[1] Canisbay, viii. 167.

ST. MACCHARMAIG.

In the Sound of Jura, off the coast of Knapdale, there is a very little island with a very long and high-sounding name, Ellanmorekilvicoharmaig. In ancient times a man named Carmaig was the proprietor of the island. His whole family consisted of a grand-daughter, whose name is not given. The young lady, having no society, was in the habit of amusing herself by angling in the Sound. On one occasion, while thus occupied, she found a bone attached to her line, which she took off and threw into the sea, only, however, to find it once more caught by her hook. Again and again she returned it to the waves, but every time she withdrew her line, there was the persistent bone entangled in it. "Chagrined with disappointment, she carried it home, and put it into the fire. The whiteness of its ashes struck her fancy. She endeavoured to preserve them, but, burning her finger in the attempt, instinctively clapt it into her mouth." By this means she became with child, and in due time the future saint was born of a virgin mother. He spent his life after the manner of saints in deeds of piety and devotion, and was finally buried in his native island. "His tomb, a

little oblong building, elevated about three feet above the ground, remains uninjured by time." Doubtless the saint was meek enough in his lifetime, but after his death, he showed himself a most irascible and vindictive ghost. If any one offered the least indignity to his monument, he was certain to be overtaken by sharp and summary vengeance. He developed also a posthumous, and rather absurd, desire for filthy lucre. His body lay in a stone coffin in a niche in the chapel he had built, and this he constituted his treasury. "Till of late not a stranger set foot on the island who did not conciliate his favour by dropping a small coin into a chink between its cover and side." He conferred on the island the magical virtue of retaining all the wealth it contained, or that was brought to it. "Nothing could be stolen from it that did not of itself return. The master of a vessel, conceiving a liking to a cross that had been erected, carried it off; but, being overtaken by a storm at the Mull of Cantyre, was obliged to throw it overboard. Straightway it floated back to a creek of the island, called, from that circumstance, Portnacroish, *i.e.*, the harbour of the cross." For many years he was good enough to do miracles for those who sought his aid, until, unfortunately, one woman, in describing the disease from which she sought relief,

used indelicate language, at which the saint was "so scandalized that he became deaf to the prayers of his votaries ever after."[1]

THE SETONS OF CLATTO.

In the old days a large portion of the parish of Kettle, usually called Kingskettle, belonged to the Setons. They were an unruly race, and their Castle of Clatto was little better than a freebooter's den. A curious story is told of how one of them was convicted by the testimony of his own right hand. It happened in this wise. One of the Scottish kings, James IV. it is presumed, was riding one evening through this part of Fife. In spite of the unsettled condition of the country he travelled quite alone, a proceeding, we are told, which was "common in these days." At a solitary part of the road a man who had been lying in ambush suddenly sprang on the king and, seizing his reins, bade him instantly dismount. Though taken completely by surprise, the king was no coward, and, having a short sword concealed under his cloak, at once drew it, and by a smart stroke cut off at the wrist the hand that held his bridle. His

[1] Knapdale, xix. 315.

assailant incontinently fled, and the king rode on his way with the traitor's hand in his pocket. He had a shrewd suspicion to what household the would-be assassin belonged. The next morning, with a suitable following, he paid a visit to the Castle of Clatto. The king ordered Seton to come before him with all his family. With grim humour he said that he had heard of their great enterprise, and that they were deserving of a more exalted position than they now occupied. One of the sons was found to be absent, and on inquiry it was stated that he had had an accident and was presently confined to bed. The king, however, was gracious, and insisted on visiting the sick man in his chamber. He professed some knowledge of leechcraft, and desired to feel his pulse. Unwillingly the patient put forth his left hand. The royal physician preferred that the right hand should be extended. Many excuses were offered, but at length the admission was extorted that he had lost the right hand. The king's skill was equal to even this emergency. He told him that he chanced to have in his pocket a hand that was at his service if it would fit him, and produced the gruesome token. After this pleasantry, he ordered the old chief and all his sons to instant execution.[1]

[1] Kingskettle, i. 382.

THE SIEGE OF CASTLE STROME.

At Strome Ferry there are the remains of an old castle, which once belonged to the Macdonnells of Glengary, until they were dispossessed by the family of Seaforth. In the spring of 1609 the Castle was besieged by Lord Kenneth of Kintail with a large following. The garrison held out manfully for a long time, and refused all terms of surrender. At length Lord Kenneth, recognizing that he could not take it and that he was endangering the lives of his men to no purpose, resolved to raise the siege. However, the night before he was about to draw off his forces, a great misfortune happened to the garrison. Under cover of the darkness certain of the women were sent out to a well near the entrance to bring in a supply of water. They accomplished their purpose, and succeeded in filling some barrels placed in a dark room, as they supposed, for the purpose. In the morning great was the consternation of the garrison when they discovered that the barrels containing their entire supply of powder had been filled up with water. Their whole means of defence being thus destroyed, they turned on the blundering women, and rated them fiercely and loudly. Unfortunately their angry abuse was overheard and

understood by a stranger and an enemy. This was Duncan MacIan vic Illichallum, who had been taken prisoner, but who had been allowed a certain amount of liberty on his giving his solemn oath that "he would never come out of the door till he were either ransomed or relieved. So, going with the keepers to the wall head, and perceiving his countrymen packing their baggage like to quit the siege, he threw his plaid on him that stood next him, loups down on a dunghill near the entry, and rising as soon as possible makes for the camp. The man that stood by him as he louped cried after him that he had lost much of his louping. He asked what it was. He said you have lost the two Clanranalds by it. He answered in the Irish phrase, "I take my being here at this time in pledge of that." So he comes where his master was and tells all as it stood with those in the castle, whereupon he renewed the siege. The defenders, knowing that their weakness was disclosed by Duncan who had louped, whereof he was lame till his dying day, they begged quarter for their lives, which was granted them, with all their baggage. Lord Kintail presently causes blow up the house with powder, which remains there in heaps till this day."[1]

[1] Lochcarron, xiii. 557.

JAMES OF THE HILL.

James an Tuim, or James of the Hill, was a noted outlaw and robber chief. "While a very young man he committed manslaughter at Elgin. Being rigorously prosecuted, he betook himself to the hills and woods of this country for shelter. In consequence of the success attending some of his solitary adventures, a band of desperadoes belonging to the parish of Kirkmichael attached themselves to his fortunes. Under his conduct they became the terror of the surrounding countries, till at length, embracing a wider range, their lawless depredations drew the attention of the Parliament of Scotland, and a considerable reward was offered for his capture. A gentleman of the name of Macintosh undertook the achievement. By corrupting the landlord of an inn which James frequented, he expected to accomplish his purpose; but an hour or two before the time concerted for the perfidy, such was the intelligence of the freebooter that he came with his party to the house, forced away the landlord, and hung him on an apple-tree that marked the march of a contiguous parish." In the end, however, he was taken, and shut up in the Castle of Edinburgh. But the end

of his career was not yet. He had a devoted and clever wife who obtained leave to visit him in prison. She brought with her a keg of butter, which innocent present his gaoler allowed her to take into his cell. Beneath the butter, however, was concealed a bundle of ropes, which the alert robber knew how to use, and by means of which he managed to escape. "He went over to Ireland, where, having killed one of the most formidable freebooters of that country, Lord Antrim, as a reward, procured him a pardon from the Crown; and, having returned to this country, he died a natural death." In the eyes of the fair sex, the romance of his exploits more than atoned for his lawless deeds. His praises are chanted in many a song. Here is a translation of one stanza :—

"Above all others, James of the Hill is the object of my affection, expert in running, in leaping and dancing, and in overcoming the brave in wrestling. Thou, James, art the object of my secret love."[1]

HOW THE M'KAYS GOT EDDRACHYLIS.

In a small island in Loch Stack, Sir Hugh M'Kay of Far had a hunting lodge. Every year, on his arrival, it was the custom of the islanders to bring

[1] Kirkmichael, xii. 443.

presents of milk, butter, and cheese for the entertainment of himself and his guests. On one occasion, the young wife of the farmer of Loan appeared, bearing the accustomed offering; but when Sir Hugh saw her he was so inflamed by her beauty that he resolved to make her his own. The fair matron, however, repelled the advances of the laird, who, following a scripture precedent, the very next day caused her husband to be assassinated, and brought the widow to the Lodge. Here she bore a son, Donald M'Kay who, became the first laird of Eddrachylis after this fashion. That land was then held by a branch of the M'Leods, of which the chief was James, son of Roderick, a turbulent man, who succeeded in making himself pretty generally feared and hated by his neighbours. Accordingly, a plot was formed for doing away with him, which was headed by Donald M'Kay. In order to avoid a family feud should they prove successful, they bribed one of the M'Leods, a notable ruffian called Donald, the son of Murdoch, to kill the laird. His reward was to be the half of the estate of Eddrachylis, and Donald M'Kay's mother for his wife. They managed to surprize the doomed James M'Leod, and slew him, his sons, and attendants. We see the hired traitor, who was famous for his skill with

the long-bow, shooting at a house in which his chief had taken refuge with arrows to which fire was attached. The straw roof was thus set on fire, and the fugitive forced to come out, when he was straightway shot down. But now that the work was done, Donald M'Leod was refused the reward that had been promised him. Donald M'Kay would have the whole of Eddrachylis for himself. He—the other Donald—might have his mother to wife if he choose, and certain lands in the Davoch of Hope: and so the arrangement was made, and the poor woman was handed over to a new savage master.[1]

SAVED BY A COMMENTARY.

After the battle of Culloden, Lord George Sackville marched through the country, sweeping off the cattle and inflicting much hardship on the unfortunate inhabitants. At his entrance into Kintail at the narrow gap in the mountains he was met by Mr. John M'Lean, the parish minister, who assured him that all the people were loyal subjects, and ought to be protected from loss. His lordship, noticing the poor peasant garb of the suppliant,

[1] Eddrachylis, vi. 294-7.

suspected a clever trick, and drawing a pistol, pointed it at the worthy man, threatening to shoot him if he did not forthwith produce proofs of his clerical character. As the readiest evidence, he demanded to see what kind of books he possessed. The old man hastened to the manse, and returned bearing a large volume of Poole's Annotations. The proof was accepted forthwith as incontrovertible ; none but a maker of sermons could be supposed to own such a work ; and Lord George, begging the old man's pardon, withdrew his men from the glen, leaving the inhabitants unmolested. "This volume of Poole's Annotations is still within the precincts of the place, carefully laid up in the library of the minister of Glensheal, and preserved like the old palladium of Troy."[1] Poole's Annotations was among the few books to be found in every manse in Scotland, and very rarely anywhere else.

A LIFE FOR A BREAKFAST.

It chanced that one of the James's was making a royal progress in Ayrshire, and the roads being so bad he was landed in a quagmire, afterwards

[1] Kintail, vi. 245.

known as the King's Stable. The king chose, however, to blame his guides, and ordered eighteen of them to be apprehended and hanged on a hawthorn tree. He then proceeded to Pethelly Hall, where, pending the king's arrival, the prisoners were shut up in a dungeon. Before reaching the Hall the king became very hungry and went into a house by the wayside and asked for refreshments. The gude-wife gave him bread and milk, doubtless the best fare she had. After he had finished his frugal meal, she told him that her husband was one of his prisoners, and pleaded that it would be hard to hang a man, after having eaten his breakfast sitting in his own arm-chair. The king recognized the justice of the appeal, and when the man was brought before him, he bade him go home and be a better bairn. The rest, however, he hanged. The badness of the roads seems to have impressed itself deeply on the king's mind. He was at the time on his way to attend the marriage of one of his relations at Sorn Castle, and the difficulty of getting along was so great that he said "that if he were to play a trick on the devil he would send him to a bridal at Sorn." [1]

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[1] Fenwick, xiv. 59.

THE BOILING OF A SHERIFF.

"The sheriff of the Mearns, Melville by name, exercised his authority with a high hand, and made himself obnoxious to the gentlemen of the county, who complained of his conduct to the king, James I. of Scotland. Barclay of Mathers in particular made frequent and repeated complaints; tired of which, in a moment of impatience, the king said to him, 'Sorrow gif he were sodden and supped in brie.' 'As your Majesty pleases,' replied Barclay, who instantly withdrew from the royal presence, and, coming home in haste, convened the gentlemen of the county, who were as much dissatisfied with the sheriff as himself. Having met in close cabal, they agreed to adhere literally to the king's words, and to make the unguarded expression of royal impatience a pretext for destroying their enemy. They invited him to attend a hunting party in the forest of Garvock, where a fire was by their direction kindled and a caldron full of water boiled upon it. In the midst of their sport they rushed with fatal design to the memorable spot, seized the unsuspecting sheriff, stripped him naked, and threw him into the boiling caldron. After he was boiled for some time, or sodden, according to

the king's expression, they took each a spoonful of the sup; so after he was sodden they supped him in brie. When the king heard of this tragic event he was highly incensed against the gentlemen of the Mearns, and particularly against Barclay, Wishart, and Arbuthnott, who were the leading men in the horrid business. To screen himself from royal vengeance Barclay built the Kame of Mathers, where in these days he must have been very secure." Pardon was afterwards granted to the Laird of Arbuthnott "because he is within the tenth degree of kindred to M'Duff, Thane of Fife." [1]

THE FERINTOSH PRIVILEGE.

"The lands belonging to Mr. Forbes of Culloden, which go by the name of Ferintosh, possessed from 1690 to 1786 an exemption from the duties of excise on spirits distilled from grain of their growth. This privilege was originally granted to Duncan Forbes of Culloden, one of those patriots who, at the glorious period of the Revolution, stood up in defence of the religion and liberties of their country. By opposing the disaffected and support-

[1] St. Cyrus. xi. 103.

ing the loyal subjects in his neighbourhood at much expense, he was materially instrumental in quashing a rebellion which at that time threatened the North of Scotland. Going some time thereafter to Holland in prosecution of the same patriotic plan, the Popish faction, in his absence, laid waste his estates, and particularly the Barony of Ferintosh, and destroyed extensive distilleries, of which it was the seat at that time. In compensation for the losses which he had thus sustained in the service of the Government, the Parliament of Scotland, by an Act passed in 1690, farmed to him and his ancestors the yearly excise of the lands of Ferintosh for the sum of four hundred merks Scotch, subject, as explained by a posterior Act, to a proportion of any additional duties of excise that might thereafter be imposed by law upon the kingdom. As a mark of public favour it was not more honourably acquired at first, than it was amply merited afterwards, by a continued succession of important services in their country's cause." On the resumption of this privilege by Government in 1786, a sum of about £20,000 was paid to the proprietor, "less than sixteen years' purchase of its proven increasing value."[1]

[1] Urquhart, v. 208.

HOW THE REGALIA OF SCOTLAND WERE PRESERVED.

The Castle of Dunnottar was anciently a place of great strength, and was on that account selected in 1651 as a fitting place in which to deposit the Regalia of Scotland—the crown, sceptre, and sword—in order to protect them from Cromwell's armies that then overran the country. The Earl Marischal, to whom the castle belonged, committed the charge of it to George Ogilvy of Barras. "This trust Mr. Ogilvy maintained with the greatest resolution. For after all the other forts and places of strength in Scotland were reduced by the English army, a body of troops, under the command of Lambert, sat down before Dunnottar. It was first summoned to surrender in November, 1651, and repeatedly afterwards during the course of the winter. About the beginning of May following the siege was converted into a blockade. And though Ogilvy was in the greatest straits for provisions and ammunition, and though he was repeatedly urged by the Chancellor of Scotland and others to convey away the Regalia to some secure place in the Highlands, and thereafter capitulate, yet he still held out till, pressed by

famine and by the mutiny of the garrison, and having found means to convey the Regalia privately to the clergyman of Kinneff, he at last capitulated on honourable terms. The English, not finding the Regalia as they expected, were highly disappointed, and shut up Ogilvy and his wife close prisoners for a year, using every severity or allurement to induce them to a discovery, but in vain; till at the Restoration of Charles II. he delivered them up to him."[1] This story is supplemented in the account of the parish of Kinneff, where we are informed how the Regalia were removed from the castle. The real custodier of them till the Restoration was Mrs. Christian Fletcher, the wife of Mr. Granger, then minister of Kinneff. "Mrs. Granger, attended by a maidservant, having been at Stonehaven, asked leave of the English General to visit her friend Mrs. Ogilvy, the wife of the commander of the castle. This leave she obtained, and on her return she brought the Crown in her lap—the general himself set her on her horse—and the maid who attended her brought away the sword and sceptre on her back in a bag of flax. The Regalia were kept sometimes in the Church of Kinneff, concealed under the pulpit, and at other times in a

[1] Dunnottar, xi. 227.

double-bottomed bed in the manse, till the Restoration in 1660, when they were delivered to Mr. George Ogilvy, who restored them. For this good service Mr. Ogilvy was made a baronet; but honest Mr. Granger and his wife had neither honour nor reward."[1]

THE MANSWORN RIG.

In the parish of Menmuir, in the county of Forfar, there is a piece of land that bears the above name. It would seem to imply that the "rig" had been associated with some act of perjury, and the following tradition is supposed to account for it. "Two lairds quarrelled about their marches, and witnesses were brought to swear to the old boundaries. One of the chiefs, provoked to hear his opponent's servant declare on oath that he then stood on his master's ground, pulled a pistol from his belt, and shot him dead on the spot. It was found that, to save his conscience, the poor servant had placed in his shoes some earth from his laird's land."[2]

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[1] Kinneff, vi. 209. [2] Menmuir, v. 153.

PICTURE PAINTED IN AGONY.

There is at the house of Kemnay a picture, which is preserved as an interesting curiosity, both for the sake of the artist, and the circumstances in which it was painted. A certain Mr. Burnett of Kemnay "was at the court of Berlin with the late Sir Andrew Mitchell as Secretary of Legation, and with him attended Frederic the Second in all his campaigns during the famous Seven Years' War. When Mr. Burnett left Berlin, on the appointment of a successor to Sir Andrew, he brought with him an effort of royal genius that deserves to be mentioned as a curiosity. This is a painting done by the father of the late King of Prussia in a fit of the gout. It is a performance much suited to procure entire credit to the inscription at the foot of it: *Fredericus pinxit in tormentis.*" [1]

HELEN OF KIRKCONNELL.

In the churchyard of the old parish of Kirkconnell, now united to Kirkpatrick-Fleming in Dumfriesshire, there lie buried Helen, a fair

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[1] Kemnay, xii. 211.

daughter of the house of Kirkconnell, and her faithful lover, Adam Fleming. Theirs was a most romantic story. Adam was not the only admirer of the lovely Helen. His rival, a gentleman in the neighbourhood, whose name is not given, was so inflamed with jealousy and hatred as to resolve on the destruction of Fleming. One evening he espied the young lovers walking by the banks of the Kirtle, while he himself on the other side was concealed by the trees. With growing passion he watched their tender loving intercourse until he could no longer restrain himself, and raised his gun and took aim at Fleming. At that moment Helen chanced to glance across the stream, and saw the murderer's purpose ; but just as he drew the trigger, she cast herself into her lover's arms and received in her own breast the fatal wound intended for him. The assassin did not long survive his victim. Fleming at once attacked him, and he, perhaps not caring much, in his horror of the deed which he had involuntarily performed, to defend himself, was soon overpowered and slain. But this revenge brought but little consolation to Fleming. He sought distraction in going abroad, and fought under the banner of Spain against the infidel. But all was in vain ; he could not forget his great sorrow. He, too, had received his death-wound on

that tragic evening on the banks of the Kirtle. He soon returned to his native place, and his first visit was to the grave of his murdered love, who had died to succour him. He stretched himself on her grave, and when anxious relatives instituted a search for the wanderer, they found him lying there peaceful in death. They buried him by her side ; and "on his tombstone are engraven a sword and cross, with '*Hic jacet Adam Fleeming.*' The memory of this is preserved only in an old Scots ballad which relates the tragical event, and which is said to have been written by Adam Fleming when in Spain. As the piece is little known, and affords a pretty good specimen of the vulgar dialect spoken at present in this country, which must have undergone little variation for upwards of 200 years, it is sent for insertion." [1]

The ballad is now very well known, at least the latter part of it, and, if this be the original form in improved versions. It is, of course, absurd to say that it was written by Adam Fleming. It seems probable that in the fourteen stanzas we have really two ballads, the first seven stanzas being put in the mouth of the unsuccessful lover, and

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[1] Kirkpatrick-Fleming, xiii. 275.

the latter seven in that of Fleming after the tragedy. We transcribe it as it stands:—

FAIR HELEN.

A Tragical Old Scots Song.

My sweetest sweet, and fairest fair,
Of birth and worth beyond compare,
Thou art the causer of my care,
Since first I loved thee:

Yet God hath given to me a mind,
The which to thee shall prove as kind
As any one that thou wilt find
Of high or low degree.

Yet, nevertheless, I am content,
And ne'er a whit my love repent;
But think my time it was well spent,
Though I disdained be.

The shall'st water makes maist din,
The deepest pool the deadest lin,
The richest man least truth within,
Though he disdained be.

O Helen fair, without compare,
I'll weave a garland of thy hair,
Shall cover me for ever mair
Until the day I dee.

O Helen sweet, and maist complete,
My captive spirit's at thy feet,
Think'st thou still fit thus for to treat
Thy pris'ner with cruelty.

O Helen brave! this still I crave,
On thy poor slave some pity have,
And do him save, that's near his grave,
And dies for love of thee.

Curst be the hand that shot the shot,
Likewise the gun that gave the crack,
Into my arms bird Helen lap,
And died for love of me.

O think na ye my heart was sair,
My love sank down, and spak na mair,
There did she swoon wi' meikle cair
On fair Kirkconnell lea.

I lighted down, my sword did draw,
I cutted him in pieces sma',
I cutted him in pieces sma',
On fair Kirkconnell lea.

O Helen chaste, thou wert modest,
Were I with thee I would be blest,
Where thou ly'st low and tak'st thy rest
On fair Kirkconnell lea.

I wish I were where I have been,
Embracing of my love Helen,
At Venus' games we've been right keen
On fair Kirkconnell lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding sheet put o'er my een,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirkconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies,
Where night and day on me she cries;
I wish I were where Helen lies
On fair Kirkconnell lea.

NINE MAIDENS' WELL.

Two versions of this tradition are to be found in the Statistical Accounts. It is an interesting example of how the popular imagination transforms a story in adapting it to different localities. In both versions there is a well and a stone, but in the one the former is prominent, in the other, the latter. In the parish of Auchindoir in Aberdeenshire "there is a spring, called the Nine Maidens' Well, near which, tradition says, nine young women were slain by a boar that infested the neighbouring country. A stone with some rude figures on it marks the spot where this tragical event is said to have happened. The boar was slain by a young man of the name of Forbes, the lover of one of the young women, and a stone with a boar's head cut on it, was set up to preserve the remembrance of his gallantry and courage. The stone was removed by Lord Forbes to his house of Putachie; and it is from this circumstance that a boar's head is quartered in the arms of that family."[1]

In the other version the romantic human interest disappears, and we have here a story apparently

[1] Auchindoir, xii. 498.

modelled on the legend of St. George. It is connected with the parish of Strathmartin in the county of Forfar. "In the north end of the parish is a large stone called Martin's Stone. Tradition says that, at the place where the stone is erected, a dragon, which had devoured nine maidens, (who had gone out on a Sunday evening one after another to fetch spring water to their father) was killed by a person called Martin, and hence it was called Martin's Stone." Is there here any suggestion that the fair victims were guilty of Sabbath-breaking, and thus brought on themselves a deserved fate? Again, is not "the person called Martin" the Saint of that name? The clerical narrator may, in his Protestant zeal, have been unwilling to recognize a saint of the old Church; for, manifest though the etymology of the name of his parish would seem, he yet says deliberately: "the derivation of the name is uncertain."[1]

FAIR LILLIARD.

"Near the border, betwixt the parishes of Maxton and Ancrum, there is a ridge of hill called Lilliard Edge, formerly Ancrum Moor. There in 1547 a

[1] Strathmartin, xiii. 99.

battle was fought between the Scots and English, and though the Scots were much fewer in numbers they obtained a great victory. The success was attributed in large measure to a young woman named Lilliard, who fought with great courage on the Scottish side; in memory of which a tombstone was erected upon her grave in the field of battle, with this inscription :—

> 'Fair maiden Lilliard lies under this stane,
> Little was her stature, but great was her fame;
> On the English lads she laid many thumps,
> And when her legs were off, she fought upon her stumps.'

Some remains of this tombstone are still to be seen."[1]

WILLIE WASTLE.

Hume Castle, in the parish of Stitchel, was a notable border stronghold, and was often besieged. When Oliver Cromwell was at Haddington he sent a summons to the then governor to deliver the fortress into his hands. The governor, confident in his power of holding it against all comers, sent back the boastful and mocking reply that "he, Willie Wastle, stood firm in his castle, and that all

[1] Maxton iii. 279.

the dogs of his town should not drive Willie Wastle down." "It is said that this is the origin of the play with which the children here often exercise themselves."[1]

BESSIE BELL AND MARY GRAY.

"Bessy Bell, celebrated in song by our Scotch Horace,[2] was descended from the ancient family of Kinved, whose surname was Bell, but now extinct. Mary Gray was of the house of Lednock, about a mile distant from Kinved. Both were distinguished beauties, but of quite different complexions. In the beginning of the great plague they retired together to a lonely place called the Burn Brea to secure themselves from infection.

'O Bessie Bell and Mary Gray,
They were twa bonnie lasses,
They biggit a town on yon burn-brae,
And theekit it ower wi' rashes.'

A young gentleman had a warm and laudable affection for them both, and paid them a visit in their retreat. But, unfortunately, he had already caught the seeds of the plague, and from him both young ladies caught the infection and died. They

[1] Stitchel, iii. 292. [2] Allan Ramsay.

were buried together in one grave, which is still pointed out at the head of the heugh, on the banks of the Amon. The foundation of their bower is also shown on 'yon burn brae.' The late proprietor, Major Barry, enclosed their burial place with a wall of mason work, with this inscription on one of the stones in the wall—'Bessie Bell and Mary Gray.'" [1]

STATISTICAL VERSES.

"Lochcarron has produced some good Highland poets. William MacKenzie and Alexander, his brother, composed good Gaelic songs. The thoughts are just and natural, and the language for the most part beyond the reach of criticism. Many of their verses would have given pleasure to the greatest admirers of Homer, Virgil, or Milton, had they heard and understood them." [2] The worthy minister is therefore emboldened to send a specimen of his own "poetry":—

This same statistical account
Is sent to please Sir John,
And if it be not elegant
Let critics throw a stone.

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[1] Moneydie, iii. 605. [2] Lochcarron, xiii. 554, 559.

We have not fine materials,
And our account is plain ;
Our lands and purling streams are good,
But we have too much rain.

In Humbay there's a harbour fine,
Where ships their course may steer ;
Such as are building villages,
Might build a village here.

From Castle Strom there is a road,
Straight down to Kessock Ferry,
And by this road the men of Sky
Do all their whisky carry.

Of old the fox killed sheep and goats,
But now the fox we kill ;
The huntsman gets four hundred merks,
And whisky to his will.

Our girls are dressed in cloak and gown,
And think themselves quite bonny ;
Each comes on Sunday to the kirk,
In hopes to see her Johnny.

A drover, when the sermon's done,
Will ask the price of cows,
But the good honest Christian
Will stick to Gospel news.

The breach of Sabbath day is here
Cause of regret and sorrow ;
All worldly things should then give way,
And be discussed the morrow.

We call for tea when we are sick,
When we want salt we grumble,
When drovers' offers are not brisk
It makes our hopes to stumble.

Now, good Sir John, it was for you
I gathered all my news,
But you will say that I forgot
To count the sheep and cows.

Of these we have a number, too,
(But then, 'twixt you and I)
The number they would never tell
For fear the beasts should die.

Sir John, send word if you are pleased
With what I here rehearse,
Perhaps 'twere better had I told
My story all in verse.

Etymological.

ETYMOLOGICAL.

Some derivations legendary — Rutherford — Guthrie — Gordon — MacRae—some names have historical significance—Loans—some merely amusing—Twyneholm—prejudice against Gaelic and in favour of Latin—Tillicoultry—Slamannan—Tranent—Rosemarkie—Grampians—Celt and Gael the same meaning—origin of Culdees—alphabetic list.

NOT the least interesting portions of the *Statistical Account* are those that deal with the significance of Place-names. Many of the derivations suggested may be far-fetched and absurd, but not a few are well-founded and reasonable enough. In the present state of the science almost any guess seems worthy of consideration, and even when it is altogether undeserving of credence, it is often amusing. Some of the etymologies are openly legendary, that is, the names have produced the legend, are not explained by them. Take, for example, the proper name Rutherford. There is a village of that name in the County of Roxburgh, to which this history is attached. Once upon a time, when there was war between Scotland and England, a party of English was encamped on one

side of the Tweed, opposed by a party of Scots on the other side. After some hesitation, the English, trusting to their superior number, crossed the river by a ford close to where the village now stands. While they were ascending a slope from the river, still known as the Plea-brae, they were attacked by the Scots and driven back with great loss. The English had good cause to Rue-the-ford ; hence the name.[1] Or take this altogether unlikely, but yet interesting account of the origin of the name Guthrie. In the Mearns there is a fishing village called Bervie,—nay, a royal burgh, for did it not receive a charter from David II. so far back as 1342? "When King David came to Bervie his servant desired a fisherwoman to gut a fish for the King's supper. 'Gut twa,' says his majesty. 'I'll gut three,' says the woman. 'Well,' replies his majesty, "Gut-three for ever shalt thou be.'"[2] Not so idyllic, but just as practical, is the legendary origin of Gordon. At a time when the killing of a wild boar was a heroic feat, and worthy of a royal recompense, the Laird of Lochinvar succeeded in killing one. He cut out the tongue as a memorial of the deed, and, putting it in his pocket, lay down and fell asleep. It so chanced, however,

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[1] Maxton, iii. 278. [2] Bervie xiii. 12.

that a gentleman, called Seaton, came upon him while he slept, and seeing the dead beast, cut off its head, and, taking it to the king, claimed and received the reward. When Lochinvar saw what had been done he travelled at once to Edinburgh, and denounced the impostor. He produced the tongue, and the head having been examined, the truth of his claim was established. "'How did you kill the boar?' asked the king. 'May it please your Majesty,' says the laird, 'I just gored it down.' 'Very well,' says the king, 'as the reward of your merit you shall be henceforth Goredown, knight of Lochinvar.' Ever since that period a boar's head has been assumed in the armorial ensigns of the Gordons."[1]

Again, who would have guessed that the well-known family of Macrae owed their surname to the fact that the founder of their clan had been an adept in getting out of scrapes? Yet so it was. In the parish of Kintail every one is a Macrae, and who should know about their ancestor if not they? Singularly lucky he was in escaping every peril into which his adventurous spirit led him. When the story of his singular luck was told to his father he said "bhai mac raghaigh" (pronounced mac rae).

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[1] Dalry, xiii. 57.

meaning, "he is the son of good fortune"; and so henceforward he was called.[1]

But a historical, or semi-historical, explanation of the origin of a proper name by no means implies that it is inaccurate. There are many names that really contain a story—are not merely attached to it.

There is a pretty little village in the parish of Dundonald called Loans, of the origin of which name an interesting account is given. It is said that King Robert the Bruce out of charity, and no doubt with a view to his soul's salvation, assigned some lands in Dundonald parish for the support of eight poor lepers. These lands were denominated Robert's loan to God, and now Robertsloan, or more generally Loans. Each leper was to receive eight bolls of meal and one merk annually; and if there should be but one, he was entitled to receive the whole. "Sir Thomas Wallace of Craigie and his ancestors were in use to present these persons. As no diseases of that description now appear, persons labouring under incurable diseases, or in indigent circumstances, are admitted to the charity."[2]

Sometimes a derivation is given with an apology

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[1] Kintail, vi. 243. [2] Monkton, xii. 403.

for offering it. Thus, for example, the narrator does not accept responsibility for the following amusing derivation of the name of his parish. Twyneholm, or Twynehame, as he says it is "anciently and perhaps more properly wrote." "Tradition hath handed down a report that nigh to the church a great battle was fought and a king slain. A large single block of granite, set up upon one end, is shown as the monument of the unfortunate monarch ; and some derive the name of the parish from the vanquished being obliged to *twyne hame*, *i.e.*, to return homewards in a winding direction." [1]

Many of the derivations are from the Gaelic, and often there is the frank admission of ignorance of that language. Some of the narrators hardly conceal their contempt for Gaelic, and deem it more scholarly to find the source of a name in Latin or Greek. In some cases there is a distinct prejudice against accepting any derivation from the Gaelic, a language regarded apparently as unworthy the recognition of scholars. In the present instance the derivation of Tillicoultry is given from the three Gaelic words, *Tullich* = a hill, *cust* = the back, and *tir* = land, the hill on which the village stands being

[1] Twyneholm, xv. 74.

regarded as at "the back of the land," as shutting in the Carse of Stirling. This is very likely correct; "but the author of this account hopes he will not be accused of affectation if he ventures to give a Latin derivation, and considers Tillicoultry as compounded either of *Tellus culta*, or *Tellus cultorum Dei.* If the first be adopted, we may suppose the name took its rise from the place having been once in a high state of cultivation; if the second, it may denote the residence of the Culdees, or of the Druids." Of course there is no difficulty in producing the remains of a Druidical circle in the neighbourhood. But the writer has little hope that his explanation will be accepted. He frankly confesses that "he is no admirer of the Gaelic; but as Gaelic derivations are at present fashionable, and as every place in our country is supposed by learned antiquarians to have an old Gaelic name, he is afraid little attention will be paid to these Latin etymologies. It must, however, be allowed that Tillicoultry is no great corruption of *Tellus culta*, or of *Tellus cultorum Dei.*"[1]

In the County of Stirling there is a parish called Slamannan, whose name exercises the ingenuity of the minister. There are traditional explanations

[1] Tillicoultry, xv. 190.

that do not quite satisfy him. One is that it was once a barren moor, and that a servant who was sent by his master to plough it did not enjoy the tough task. Being asked by his master how the ground would turn out, he replied that it would *slay man and mare.* Another suggestion, that is deemed more probable, is that a great battle was fought in the neighbourhood, where *many* were *slain.* The writer does not profess to know Gaelic, but he records that he has been told that in that language the name signifies the Blind Man's Valley. His own final guess is that as it is usually spelled Slamanna, the latter part of it is probably the same as in Dalmeny, which means black heath; accordingly he concludes that Slamannan probably signifies some other kind of heath, as brown or grey.[1] It is quite likely that he was right in supposing that -meny and -manna are from the same root.

There is a parish in East Lothian called Tranent. "The general opinion is that the name is a corruption of Trinity; and the form of the church is alleged as a proof of the derivation." But then there is the awkward fact that the oldest form of the word is Travernent, which it is manifestly

[1] Slamannan, xiv. 79.

difficult to connect with Trinity. But what more easy than to regard it as a Latin word? "There is a tradition still extant in the opposite coast of Fife that a party of Danes once landed on their shore, but were suddenly obliged to seek refuge in their boats and put to sea. The cry of the exulting natives was tranent, or travernent, *i.e.*, let them sail over or right across. Accordingly they landed in this parish, from which circumstance it had the name."[1] We must believe that the natives of Fife were all scholars, and in the regular habit of using the tongue of the ancient Romans. Equally far-fetched is the explanation given of the name of Rosemarkie, a parish in Ross-shire. "The most probable account of the origin of the name is this. To the parish church in former times was annexed a steeple in an elevated and conspicuous station, which being one of the first objects observed by mariners in coming up the Moray Firth, they would naturally say to one another, 'Mark ye Ross,' which for the sake of better sound was turned into Rosemarkie."[2]

As the origin of the name of the great mountain range of the Grampians is still disputed, or is quite unknown, the following attempt at an explanation

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[1] Tranent, x. 83. [2] Rosemarkie, xi. 333.

may be given. It is derived from two Gaelic words *gránt* and *Beinn.* "*Grant*, like the ἅγιος of the Greeks, has two opposite meanings. In some fragments of Ossian it signifies beautiful. This meaning now is obsolete, and it signifies deformed, ugly. The old Caledonians, as these mountains abounded in game, and connecting beauty with utility, might have given the name in the former sense."[1]

The origin of the names Celt and Gael is interesting, for it would appear that they have exactly the same significance. *Coill* or *Coille* signifies a wood; from it is derived Coilltich, *i.e.*, Celts or inhabitants of the woods. Another word for wood is *Gad*, from which come "Gaidhiol, Gadelians, Galli, and Gadeni, names given to the Gaidheil or Gael of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, all signifying men of the wood, probably because they first moved to the westward, when the face of the earth was all covered with wood."[2] "In the same account (p. 461) Culdees are explained to be those who lived in cells or caves. *Cuil* and *Ceal* means a sequestered corner, cave, etc. Those who retired to such a place were called *cuildeach*, plural *cuildich*, which they who spoke or wrote Latin turned into culdeus and culdei, altering only the termination."

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[1] Kirkmichael, xii. 428. [2] Blair-Atholl, ii. 471.

There is no word that enters more frequently into place names in Scotland than Kil, usually as the first syllable. In the Statistical Accounts it is commonly rendered "place of burial." It is thus explained: "Kil, in Latin cella, originally meant the cell or place appropriated to the worship of a saint. But as there was always a small portion of ground around such a place of worship, which was considered consecrated and used for burying those who died in the peace of the Church, kil or cella came in process of time to signify a burial-place, which is now the common meaning of the word in the Gaelic language." In a note it is added: "I suppose Cille (Kil) to be derived from the Latin cella after the introduction of Christianity into this country, and that the Latin term cella is derived from the Gaelic word cuile, signifying a corner, or place of retirement."[1] Kil, then, it would seem, is derived from the Gaelic through the Latin.

The following list of names, with the significance attached to them by the different writers, may be not without interest:—

Aberbrothock, at the mouth of the muddy stream.
Aberdour, at the mouth of the water.
Aberfoyle, pool at the meeting of rivers.
Abernethy, the work of Nectan, king of Picts.

[1] Kiltarlity, xiii. 507.

Airth, high place.
Alness, headland on the brook.
Alvie, cold island.
Ancrum, crook on the river.
Anstruther, a valley.
Arbirlot, orig. Abereliot, at the mouth of the Eliot.
Ardclach, stony high ground.
Ardersier, height on the edge.
Ardnamurchan, point of the great seas.
Arngask, large field.
Arran, high island ; or Ar-fhin, Fin's slaughter.
Arrochar, hilly country.
Assynt, in and out, undulating.
Athelstaneford, Athelstane, a Danish chief, slain here.
Atholl, great happiness.
Auchenleck, field of rock.
Auchterarder, summit of the rising ground.
Auchtergaven, upper part of the western land.
Auchterhouse, house on the height.
Auchtermuchty, village of the king.
Aultgrande, ugly burn.
Avoch, ford, or shallow water.
Ayr, shallow stream.
Ayton, town on the Eye.

Baldernock, orig. Baldruinech. Druids' town.
Balfron, town of sorrow.
Ballantrae, town on the shore.
Ballingry, village of the cross.
Balmaghie, township of Maghie.
Balmerino, sailors' town.
Balquhidder, a village in five glens.
Banchory, opening between two hills.
Banvie, rivulet of the boar.
Barray, St. Barr's island.
Bedrule, resting place of St. Rule.
Bellie, broom, or mouth of the ford.
Bendearg, red mountain.
Ben ledi, mountain of God.

Birnie, burn nigh, village near the burn.
Birse, a thicket.
Blantyre, a warm retreat.
Boharm, the bow above the cairn.
Boleskine, town on the loch.
Bonkle, Bona Cella.
Borgue, little hill.
Bothwell, house by the well.
Bowden, den in the bend, or St. Bothen's.
Brechin, top of the declivity, or view of the Firth.
Bruar, noisy water.
Buittle, boot-hill, from muster of cavalry; or Butt-hill, from muster of archers; or Bowet-hill, beacon.

Cabrach, the timber moss.
Cadder, back of the oak wood.
Caerlaverock, fort near the sea.
Calder, wood by the water.
Callander, hazel grove.
Cambuslang, crooked rivulet of St. Launus.
Cambusnethan, St. Nethan's or Nectan's at bend of stream.
Campsie, crooked glen.
Canisbay, Canute's bay.
Canonbie, coenobium or monastery.
Caputh, decayed wood.
Careston, town of Carril, an Ossianic hero.
Cargill, village of the church.
Carluke, church of St. Luke.
Carnbie, birch cairn.
Carnoustie, cairn of heroes.
Carnwath, cairn of the ford.
Carriden, fort among the reeds.
Carstairs, town of provisions.
Channelkirk, children's kirk, Holy Innocents.
Chirnside, by the side of the cairn.
Clackmannan, kirk town of Annan.
Closeburn, (Kilosburn), church of St. Osburn.
Clunie, green pastures between woods.
Collessie, the bottom of the den.

Colmonell, turtledove, or St. Colman's.
Comrie, confluence of two waters.
Contin, meeting af the waters.
Corstorphine, glen with white steps, or Croix d'or fine.
Cortachy, an enclosed place.
Coull, the corner.
Covington, convent town.
Coylton, town of King Coil.
Cramond, fort on the Almond.
Crathie, stony fields.
Crieff, haunch of the hill.
Cromarty, crooked bay.
Cromdale, crooked meadow.
Crossmichael, St. Michael's cross.
Croy, croin, a cross.
Cruden, "kill the Dane," battle here between Canute and Malcolm.
Culdees, recluses.
Culross, back of the peninsula.
Culter, ploughshare.
Cults, a corner.
Cumbernauld, meeting of springs.
Cumbrae, place of shelter.
Currie, a Roman station.
Cushnie, hoar frost.

Dalanspidal, plain of the hospital.
Dalkeith, plain between two rivers.
Dallas, watered valley.
Dalmellington, Dame Helen's town.
Dalmeny, black heath.
Dalry, king's dale.
Dalrymple, valley of the slaughter of kings.
Dalserf, hill of the stag (cervus).
Deer, worship of God.
Denino, village in the den.
Deskford, the ford by the linn.
Dirleton, the dirling or trembling town.
Dollar, secluded place.

Dores, rising ground near a water.
Dornoch, hill of the oak, or horse's hoof. A Danish general killed by leg-bone of a horse in 1257.
Douglas, black water.
Dowally, black meadow.
Dron, a ridge.
Drumblade, hill covered with corn.
Drumoak (pron. Dalmaik), St. Mairk's hill.
Dryfesdale, dale of the Dryfe or driving water.
Drymen, a ridge.
Duddingston, house on sunny side of hill.
Dull, a haugh or plain.
Dumfries, dorsum freti, back of the frith.
Dundee, dei donum, gift of God.
Dunfermline, hill of the noisy, or crooked, water.
Dunian, St. John's hill.
Dunipace (in Gaelic Seoth-dhun), hill of peace.
Dunkeld, hill of hazels.
Dunnichen, hill of Ichen.
Dunoon, new fort, or house of the virgins.
Dunsyre, the long hill.
Durris, mouth of the highlands.
Duthil, excellent valley.
Dysart, temple of the Most High.

Eaglesham, eagle's village, or church in the holm.
Ecclesmachan, church of St. Machan.
Ecclesmagirdle, church of St. Magdalene.
Ecclesgreig, church of St. Gregory.
Eckford, horse ford.
Edinkillie, face of the wood.
Eddrachillis, between two kyles or straits.
Edrom (orig Etherham), village on the Ether.
Elie, out of the sea.
Elgin, from Helgy, a Norse General gained battle in 927.
Erochty, place of assembly.

Falkirk, broken, or spotted, kirk.
Farnell, den of swans.
Fearn, alders.

Fenwick, village by the fen, or blind man's valley.
Fettercairn, pass of the cairn.
Fetteresso, between two rivers.
Fintry, fair land.
Fodderty, meadow along the side of a hill.
Fordoun, brow of a hill.
Fordyce, bleak country,
Forfar, town on a lake.
Fortingall, work of strangers.
Fossoway, desert of deer.
Foveran, place of springs.

Gareloch, contracted loch.
Galston, village of the Gauls, or strangers.
Gamrie, a running leap.
Garry, flight of the dart.
Garvald, rough burn.
Garvock, rugged hill.
Gask, a slope.
Gigha, God's island.
Gladsmuir, moor of the gled or kite.
Glass, green.
Glassary, grey strath.
Glenelg, hunting valley.
Glengairn, valley of the rough water.
Glenluce, valley of herbs.
Glenmuick, valley of the swine.
Grampians, hills of gloom.
Greenock, sunny bay.
Gretna or Graitney, great knowe.

Hawick, village on a river.
Holywood, from sacred Druidical grove.
Hounam, habitation of Houna.
Houston, Hugh's or Hugo's town.

Inch-Broyock, island of trouts.
Inchture, tower on the island.
Inverchaolain, arable land at mouth of river.

Jedburgh, town of the Gadeni.
Jura, island of yew trees.

Keith, wind.
Kelso (Calchow), chalk-heugh.
Kennoway, town above the cave.
Kilallan, St. Fillan's.
Kilbarchan, church of the hill-bounded vale.
Kilberry, St. Berry's.
Kilcalmonell, St. Columba's of the swans.
Kilchenzie, St. Kenneth's.
Kilconquhar, burial place of St. Conacher.
Kildrummy, little burial mount.
Killarrow, St. Marrow's.
Killearn, St. John's.
Killiecrankie, wood of trembling.
Killin, burial-place by the pool, or of Fingal.
Kilmarnock, burial-place of St. Marnock.
Kilmaronock, St. Marnock's.
Kilmaurs, St. Mary's or St. Maur's.
Kilmaveonog, St. Eonog's or St. Veonog's.
Kilmorack, cell of young Mary (lady unknown).
Kilmory, chapel of St. Mary.
Kilmun, chapel of St. Mary.
Kilrenny, St. Irnie's, or St. Irenaeus'.
Kilsyth, cell of peace.
Kiltarlity, St. Thalargus.
Killearn, burial place of the great man (unknown).
Kincardine, the heads of the friends.
Kinfauns, head of the plain.
Kingarth, bold, furious head.
Kinghorn, called from king's hunting horn.
Kingoldrum, town between the ridges.
Kingussie, head of the fir wood.
Kinkell, the head or principal church.
Kinloss, head of the loch.
Kinnaird, head of the height.
Kinnettles, out from the bog.
Kinnoull, head of the view.

Kinross, head of the peninsula.
Kintail, head of two bays.
Kintore, head of the wood.
Kirkaldy, kirk of the Culdees.
Kirkbean, the high fort.
Kirkcolm, St. Columba's.
Kirkcudbright, kirk of St. Cuthbert.
Kirkden, kirk in the den.
Kirkintilloch, end of a long tongue of rising ground.
Kirkliston, enclosure beside a river.
Kirkmatreck, church in the brake.
Kirkpatrick-Durham, St. Patrick's in the barren district.
Kirkurd, the kirk quarter.
Kirkwall, the great kirk, or of St. Magnus.
Kirriemuir, St. Mary's kirk.
Knapdale, hill and dale.
Knockando, black hill.

Lairg, bordering on the lake.
Lammermuir, moor sur la mer, or moor where lambs abounded.
Lammerton, town on la mer.
Lanark, full ark or granary, or a house of blaeberries.
Lauder, the lade, or course of a river.
Lecropt, half dry land.
Lenzie, from linea; Roman wall traverses the parish.
Lesmahagow, St. Machute's Green.
Leuchars, a wet place, or of rushes.
Leven, le avon, or smooth river.
Lhanbryd, St. Bridget's.
Linton, town on the Lyne.
Lismore, large garden.
Lochmaben, loch of the maidens, or of the fair.
Lochrutton, loch on the straight road, i.e. to Ireland.
Logierait, hollow place for settling differences.
Loudon, hill of fire.
Luggan, a hollow.
Lumphanan, a bare little valley.
Lunan, marshy ground.
Lundie, the pool of God.

Makerston, town of the son of Kerr.
Markinch, merk land.
Maryculter, devoted to St. Mary.
Mauchline, field of flax.
Maybole, from the May pole.
Melrose, a bare promontory.
Menmuir, the great moss.
Mertoun, town of the mire.
Methven, the middle part.
Miningaff, a stony moor.
Minto, hill of the kid.
Moffat, long holm.
Montrose, the fenny promontory, or mount of roses, or the three hills.
Monymusk, hilly and marshy ground.
Montquhitter, place for ensnaring deer.
Monzie, deer hill, or hill foot, or good plain.
Monzievaird, plain of bards.
Morham, great village.
Morven, great division.
Moulin, smooth pool.
Mouswald, moor by the wood.
Muckart, height of the wild boar.
Murroes, moor house.
Muthill, north side of the hill.

Nairn, alders.
Neilston, Neil's town.

Ochils, oak hills.
Ordiquhill, hollow beside the height.
Orphir, fire land, *i.e.*, peats.
Olrig, son of Eric.

Paisley, brow of a rock.
Panbride, St. Bridget's fane.
Parton, hill top.
Peebles, from soil abounding in pebbles.
Pennycuik, cuckoo's hill.
Penpont, arched bridge.

Perth, finished work.
Peterculter, St. Peter's in the back of the country.
Pitcogue, a narrow hollow.
Pitfour, hollow beside a fortification.
Pittentaggart, the priest's croft.
Pittenweem, coal pits by the Weem. Weem is a large cove.
Portmoak, St. Moak's.
Portree, king's harbour.

Rathen, St. Ethernan's.
Rathven, fern rock.
Redgorton, red gore—result of battle of Luncarty.
Renfrew, the heath division.
Rhynd, a point.
Riccartoun, Richard's town—Sir Richard Wallace.
Rogart, very high.
Rosemarkie, Ross mark ye.
Rosneath, Virgin's promontory.
Rosskeen, meeting place of (East and West) Ross.
Rothesay, king's seat.
Rothiemurchus, great plain of firs.
Row, a point.

Saddell, plain of the priests.
Selkirk, kirk in the wood.
Skiehallion, maiden's breasts.
Skene, a dagger.
Slains, health.
Slamannan, *vid* p. 267.
Smailholm, a small village.
Spey, a long stride.
Stitchel, a declivity.
Stonykirk, St. Stephen's kirk.
Stornoway, on the point of the bay.
Straiton, village on the street, *i.e.*, Roman road.
Strathblane, strath of the warm water.
Strichen, St. John's strath.
Strickathrow, valley where the king fought.
Strowan, streams.
Swinton, swine town.

Tain, from the Thane of Ross.
Tarland, the flat plain.
Tealing, a country of brooks.
Thurso, Thor's river.
Tibbermuir, large well.
Tilliecoultry, *vid* p. 266.
Tilt, the warm rivulet.
Tinto, hill of fire.
Tinwald, harbour, or house in a wood.
Tiree, king's house.
Torosay, hill of the ford.
Torphichen, ten hills.
Torryburn, burn of the king's height.
Torthorwald, town of Thor in the wood.
Tranent, *vid* p. 268.
Traprene-Law, hill where Queen Mary was trapped by Bothwell —trappe reine.
Tulchan, the little hill.
Tulliallan, beautiful hill.
Tulliebole, poet's hill.
Tulloch, hillock.
Tullynessle, a dwelling on a sloping bank.
Tummill, woody, or shadowy.
Tundergarth, castle of the garden, or of sanctuary.
Twyneholm, *vid* p. 265.
Tyre-beggar, a hill that tires beggars to cross.

Uig, a solitary place.
Urray, new ford.

Walston, town of the well.
Wamphray, deep vale in the forest.
Weem, a cave.
Wemyss, a cave.
Westruther (Wolfstruther), strath of the wolf.
Wiston, Woolston, town of wool.

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